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EDITORIAL

##261 JULY 2015

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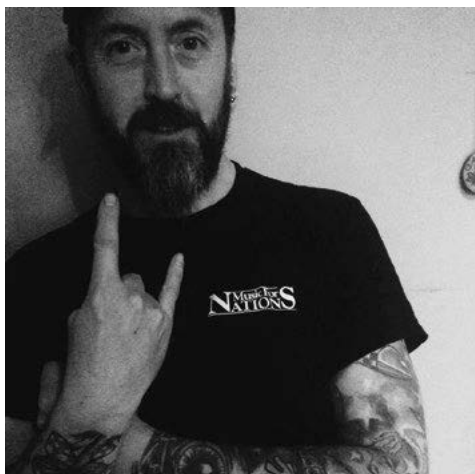
AWARDS

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'Innovation in Publishing' Award 2005 - Highly Commended

ACE Press Awards

'Circulation Excellence and Endeavour' - Gold, 2008



Whenever you mention Cradle Of Filth, one thing you can be sure of is that *everyone* will have an opinion – and most of the time it's a strong opinion. What a brilliant position for any band to be in, or perhaps more specifically, for Dani Filth to find himself in. For many bands, the biggest fear (even if they won't admit it) is to find themselves faced with a mediocre, middle-of-the-road, average review for their output (live or studio), or to be greeted with a shrug of the shoulders when mentioned in conversation. No-one wants to be 'okay', right? Either excite people or at least be shit enough that people laugh at your epic failings. At least Mr Filth has people baulking at the mere mention of his name, or in contrast, people recognising and acknowledging and appreciating his contribution and importance in the UKBM scene. There is no middle ground with Cradle and that is a great thing in my opinion, especially in a world when bands are reliant on revisionism, past glories or regurgitating second hand ideas. I've had some weird, substance-induced run-ins with Mr Filth over the years as an "industry professional" (whatever that means), but regardless, I applaud Cradle's output and importance to the music scene that I love. Any doubters, go and check out the new opus 'Hammer Of The Witches', cos it's a savage beast. Trust Terrorizer, okay?

As always we hope you'll enjoy your new issue and its contents therein. I've been listening to some bloody amazing records for the past few weeks – everything from Mirror (who feature members of Satan's Wrath) to Make (awesome new post-Isis metal coming this summer), Cattle Decapitation's utterly savage newie and the new Myrkur album, which has blown my mind! It's all been inspiration to create this magazine and I hope it'll excite you as much when you read on from here.

Here's to next month – see you again soon!

DARREN SADLER



COVER PIC: SAM SCOTT HUNTER BACKGROUND ILLUSTRATION: STEVE NEWMAN

WHAT TEAM TERRORIZER HAVE BEEN SCARING THE NEIGHBOURS WITH THIS MONTH...



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'GOBLIN REBIRTH'

(RELAPSE)



DARREN SADLER

(CONSULTANT EDITOR)

MYRKUR
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(RELAPSE)

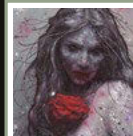


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(NOISE SALVATION)



JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

SENIOR WRITER

PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS
'MERCY'

(DEATHWISH)

STAFF CUTS



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NEWS FROM THE

FRONTLINE

EDITED BY KEZ WHELAN



NILE GO "ANTI-TECH" ON ALBUM NUMBER EIGHT



"I'm not going to give a fuck whether it's impossible or whether it's simple or catchy, it's just got to be heavy!"

Despite always being referred to as a technical death metal band, Karl Sanders, the musical mastermind behind death metal titans Nile, has been looking to some more primitive inspiration for the band's upcoming eighth record 'What Should Not Be Unearthed'.

"I think a big inspiration was anti-technical inspiration. People call us a tech-death band but this record, to me, it's anti-tech," Karl says. "I said to myself when writing that I'm not going to give a fuck whether it's impossible or whether it's simple or catchy, it's just got to be heavy!"

With the band producing 'What Should Not Be Unearthed' themselves (but under the watchful ear of distinguished producer Neil Kernon), Karl believes that the musical direction of Nile has never been stronger.

"I think with this one we decided we wanted to produce it ourselves yet still have Neil around to give us some guidance," says Karl. "He is always a phone call away so it was kind of a teamwork thing. He's like family at this point, he really cares about the band."

The band's previous record, 'At The Gate Of Sethu',

demonstrated the musical expertise of the band, but Karl explains how the new record focuses on sheer brutality rather than technicality.

"This one is very song orientated, the last record was very musicianship based. It was super surgical [with] a lot of clean sounds and you could hear all of the instrumentation," he explains. "I hate comparing to other records but if you were talking about Mötley Crüe, this would be our 'Shout At The Devil' record. It's not amazingly complex but it's got a big fucking fat sound! It's dark and brutal and big and metal!"

BULLET POINTS

The lineup for this year's **Damnation Festival** is heating up, with Amenra and Solstafir being the latest bands to be confirmed. They'll join At The Gates, High On Fire, Mono, Asphyx, Altar Of Plagues, 40 Watt Sun and more.
www.DamnationFestival.co.uk

Ireland's dark ambient alchemists **From The Bogs Of Aughiska** will be heading out on a UK tour with crushing doom trio **Coltsblood** this October, calling at Oxford, Liverpool, Nottingham and London. For a full list of tour dates, visit
www.Terrorizer.com

Eyehategod are hitting the UK this month, with shows in Cardiff (June 22nd), Belfast (24th), Leeds (25th), Manchester (26th) and Bristol (28th) all lined up.
www.Eyehategod.ee

Actor **Christopher Lee** has sadly passed away at the age of 93. Lee's roles in films such

as 'The Devil Rides Out', 'The Wicker Man', 'The Lord Of The Rings' and 'Count Dracula' (to name but a few) provided inspiration for metal bands the world over, and he even released his own symphonic metal album 'Charlemagne: By The Sword And The Cross' in 2010. Terrorizer's thoughts go out to his family and friends; he will be sorely missed.



With such high hopes, Karl hopes that the success of the record could open new and exciting touring opportunities for Nile. "We are looking at some stuff in the Far East and going to some places we have never been before," he explains. "In fact, we are talking about twelve dates in Russia this time around instead of two." With touring still the main method to expand a band's popularity, Karl hopes to capitalise on the global expansion metal has enjoyed over the past several years.

"Metal is reaching out! We've had metal in central Europe, England, America and it's always been strong," Karl states. "It's been there for the past couple of decades and its spread and it's fresh and new in these other places and that is an incredible thing! It's an exciting time we are living in."

With the new record set for release in August, Nile have already made touring plans in support of 'What Should Not Be Unearthed' and with the band touring Europe and the UK with the legendary Suffocation, Karl could not be more excited for the tour.

"Man, come on! Nile and Suffocation? Across all of Europe and the UK, that is going to rule! Those shows are going to be so brutal, it's going to be out of control!" Karl exclaims. "If you like brutal metal this is the tour to go and see!"

Words: Darren Sadler

'What Should Not Be Unearthed' is released on August 28th via Nuclear Blast. The band tour the UK in September
www.Nile-Catacombs.net

WHEN CAVE IN AND CONVERGE COLLIDE - HERE'S MUTOID MAN

Mutoid Man is a new project who feature Cave In guitarist/frontman Stephen Brodsky and Converge drummer Ben Koller, and, according to Stephen, is a fusion of all the characteristics of music he champions.



With a fresh and intriguing sound, Mutoid Man – completed by bassist Nick Cageao – have just released their debut full-length, 'Bleeder', to the world. But with a combination of so many varying styles under their umbrella, it can be difficult for those who try to categorise Mutoid Man under one genre. Stephen believes that the truly exciting element of Mutoid Man is that the band can cater for everyone's tastes.

"I think it's all under the stars and signs of rock 'n' roll. I think it's different expansions or expressions or mutations of rock music," reveals Stephen. "It includes some metal, some rock and roll, some classic punk, hardcore, a little bit of psych-rock. It is just all forms of rock and roll mashed into one mutated little unit!"

"I think it just comes naturally for us to work in that way, our music tastes are pretty eclectic so Little Richard gets brought up often and so does Led Zeppelin, so does Botch, Dillinger Escape Plan. We just run the gamut all things rock 'n' roll. It's is nothing new, it's been around for decades so it's really easy to never run out of ideas when it comes to crafting new music."

Mutoid Man began in 2012 and with the release of an EP, 'Helium Head', the following year it quickly became apparent that Stephen wanted to direct Mutoid Man towards a full-working band. He explains that when it came to the recording of 'Bleeder' he felt that Mutoid Man was no longer just a project but something truly special.

"It felt more like a band when we went in and made this new record, whereas when we did the EP it was just me and Ben just banging out some riffs that we thought that fit well together," says Stephen. "We wrote the full-length as a three piece band, we had some miles under our belt from playing shows and touring a little bit, so I think the expectations that we had upon ourselves and also the momentum of being an actual band was established prior to making this record."

"We would love to come overseas and play! I think both Cave In and Converge fans would really get a lot out of it and there seems to be plenty of people in those categories overseas so I think it is just a matter of time."

www.Facebook.com/MutoidMan



"I watch tons of B-movies and genuinely like maybe only a third of them"

BAR-BARIAN WRATH TRIBULATION

WITH SWEDISH DEATH METALLERS **TRIBULATION** RIDING HIGH AFTER THEIR GREAT NEW ALBUM 'THE CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT', WE COULDN'T RESIST THE CHANCE TO CATCH UP WITH THEM AND TALK BEER, GOTH CLUBS AND HORROR MOVIES...

DRINKS ON THE ROAD

Adam (Zaars, guitar): "Can of beer, Trooper's good. Something light that you can drink easily. I'm not much of a drinker before the show but during the show usually one or two beers, light cans of lager. Some ales perhaps, just to kick off with if you get a little nervous. We usually end up drinking beer. On a tour like this, some nights nothing much happens at all and then some nights... boom! Then the stronger stuff comes out like vodka and then we just smoke weed, I guess. After that, it can get kind of mellow."

Johannes (Andersson, bass & vocals): "Like we did in Florida when we went to The Castle in Tampa, it's supposed to be one of Marilyn Manson's favourite hangouts. That was really good, to get picked up after the show and it turned out to be a real adventure."

AZ: "Really nice after a tour of constant crap to go to a fun goth club. It was nice to have an adventure, something unexpected. It's like, come to my bar! Sure! Have some free drinks! Sure! So much better than being at a boring venue all day and all night."

TOUR ANECDOTES

JA: "None that we can remember..."

AZ: "The most interesting one I can think of is the story of Doro Pesch. We were in Atlanta at a venue that had two stages, Heaven and Hell – we played upstairs. Anyway, all of a sudden while I'm smoking out here, I was like, I recognise this band, so I walked down to the small stage and there she is. And so

the night went on, we were all relaxing and drinking beer on our tour vehicle called the Band Waggon. Our crew guy knocks on the door and I open it and he says, "Hey, Doro Pesch wants to meet you," and she just came up to say hi."

JL: "She popped in and out within like fifteen minutes so all the time we were like "Woah! Hey, Doro Pesch." Then when she went away we were all, "Hey, what just happened?"

AZ: "But yes, weird and surreal things happen when you're out on tour. Literally anything could happen."

FAVOURITE HORROR MOVIES

AZ: "The first that comes to mind is [Werner] Herzog's 'Nosferatu'. I think we always have to mention that because the movie itself had a soundtrack by a composer who made such a big impression on the band early on in our career. Each of them are unique in their own way and they carry the same kind of atmosphere that we've been trying to conjure up in our music for a long time. And the second one would be Dario Argento, who also has made a big influence on us early on. I think he was kind of lucky at times, the movie 'Suspiria' is an art film, it's fantastic and a couple of other films that he's made are also fantastic but some of his movies are so bad. I just watched the 'Dracula 3D' trailer. Perhaps I should watch all of it before I comment on it but what I did see looked absolutely terrible, which is odd because I can't understand how someone can create something that's so good and then make something that's that poor later down the line. I guess it just depends on which way you're looking at it. You have to

get into a certain mindset for certain movies, but sometimes they're just so awful so that's not really the point. I think it's a fine line, they're all terrific ideas but they usually work out to be fantastic or they fail miserably."

CLASSIC VS MODERN HORROR

AZ: "It's a different thing altogether. I recently watched a brand new movie that's part of a trilogy called 'Annabelle'. I thought it was pretty good. I watched it in the theatre since it was the only horror film that was showing at that time of the day. I thought it was good, I don't know if I would've had the same feeling if I'd watched it at home but in the theatre it was good. I think it's a very fun movie, it's sort of like comparing a ghost house to a rollercoaster, the former of course being the classics, because the old movies didn't really have that kind of scare factor, so I think for some people, it's changed a lot nowadays. A combination of the two would be good, I think. Other than that, no really good recent horror movies spring to mind. I watch tons of B-movies and genuinely like maybe only a third of them but I enjoy watching everything. It all depends on what you're doing and want to get out of it. Then you have a movie like Francis Ford Coppola's 'Dracula' which is not gory; it's beautiful, like being in a theatre. Even though we don't incorporate anything like that into our lyrical side it's a feeling of horror always somehow feel a connection with."

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studio report

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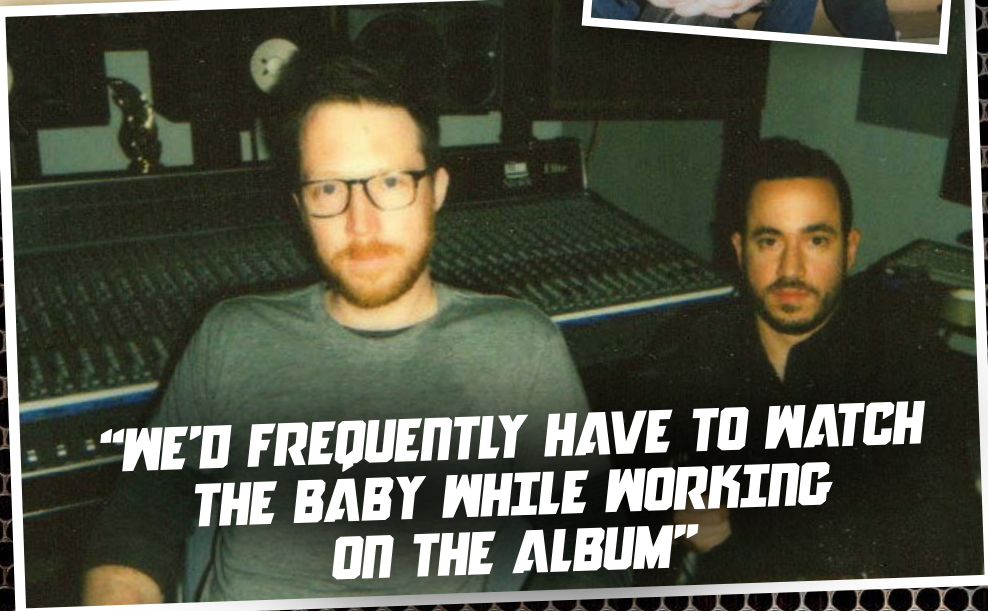
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Studio: **Steve Moore's
Private Studio, Bath, NY**

Producer: **Steve Moore
and A.E. Pattera**

Release Date: **TBC**

Label: **Relapse**



Assuming you went over the material for the release of 'The Zombi Anthology' with a fine-toothed comb, what differences are most noticeable for you when the Zombi of yesterday and today are compared?

Steve Moore [bass/synths]: "It was fun revisiting the material on the anthology. There's a playful, experimental element to these recordings that I don't hear on any of our other albums. When we recorded the material on the first half of the anthology we'd only played a couple shows, and only had a handful of 'songs', so we recorded a few filler tracks to flesh out an album. 'Sequence 7', for instance, is just A.E. [Pattera, drums] improvising on an old Wurliitzer while I bowed cymbals. We lost some of that playfulness as the focus shifted to a more live-oriented, drum/bass guitar-heavy sound, but in my opinion that's when we came into our own. The new record is an all killer, no filler synth-rock album. Play time is over."

What do you feel have been the biggest lessons, musical or otherwise, you've learned in that time?

A.E. Pattera [drums]: "Our process has become more concise. Our demo work and overall production

has become easier and more streamlined. We still do everything ourselves, but as we've gained more use and experience of recording techniques over the years it's made the whole process easier."

Was there anything you did differently in the writing or recording of the new album?

SM: "Our last couple records, 2009's 'Spirit Animal' and 2011's 'Escape Velocity', were written remotely and pieced together via email. Not an ideal situation, but that's what it had to be. For the new record, we went back to the way we wrote 'Cosmos' and 'Surface To Air'; we got together, set up our gear and recorded hours of improvised drums, bass guitar and synth jams. Afterwards, we'd review the practice tapes and build off the highlights."

How has it been keeping a creative separation between Zombi and any of the other projects you're involved in?

A.E.P: "It's been easy. When we're working on Zombi material, that's our focus, and when we're not, our other projects keep us busy. Creatively, we both have our individual 'sound' so to speak. It's the combination of both that makes Zombi what it is."

Have there been any studio mishaps or adventures during the process of the new album that you care to share with us?

SM: "We braved a few blizzards driving back and forth between Pittsburgh, PA and Bath, NY. And my wife and I had our second daughter. Since most of the writing and recording took place in my basement, we'd frequently have to watch the baby while working on the album. I have pictures of A.E. holding her when she was just a couple weeks old, surrounded by synthesizers."

Have you taken any steps to expand the instrumentation that goes into Zombi?

A.E.P: "No conscious steps. If a song calls for something, say guitar, we're not opposed to it. The 'Spirit Animal' album is a good example."

Are there any thematic attachments to the sonic material you've written for the new record? What are your plans for cover art and how does it apply to the entire package?

A.E.P: "No, we never have a preconceived thematic idea before starting an album. It just so happens that the way we write usually incorporates bold themes and a very cinematic sound. Cover art was handled by Jacob Escobedo as his work goes hand in hand with the album, and we're really excited about what he's done."

As an instrumental outfit, what sort of headspace do you have to get into in order to create music?

SM: "It involved a strict regimen of marijuana, American spirits and Jim Beam."

If someone told you that in 'x' amount of years that you'd not only tour with, but also be signed to the same label as Goblin (albeit a derivation of), would you have believed them?

A.E.P: "Certainly wouldn't have believed it. We're big fans of them as people and musicians, it's been a pleasure to tour with them and to now share a label."

SM: "For the record, I was the one who put Goblin Rebirth in touch with Relapse. We are the masters of our own destiny."

Do you ever look at the success of what you've done with Zombi and, considering the style you play, say to yourselves, with mock surprise, "Umm, what the hell just happened?"

SM: "It used to surprise us. But now we have surviving members of Tangerine Dream working with Jean Michel Jarre, and both John Carpenter and Goblin have new albums out, I guess it's obvious that the demand for this kind of music is strong. I guess the real surprise will be if people are still interested in us now that the O.G.s are back on form." 🐼

www.Zombi.us



ASHES OF CARNAGE



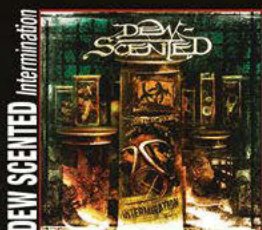
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CONTAGION

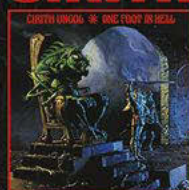
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CIRITH UNGOL



One Foot In Hell
Frost & Fire
King Of The Dead
LPs - out now!



KING DIAMOND



Voodoo
The Graveyard
House of God
Out now!



RIOT
Brethren of the Longhouse
Nightbreaker
Live In Japan

Out 10.07.15



BETWEEN THE BURIED & ME COMA ECLIPTIC



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Progressive metal band BETWEEN THE BURIED AND ME return with their highly anticipated, seventh full-length album, COMA ECLIPTIC. Grandiose. Dynamic. Heavy. Melodic. Technically Challenging.

ON TOUR NOW!

Democrytic + MARCHED SAINT + Death Angel
August 2015
6th LONDON - Electric Ballroom
CARNIVAL CORPSE + ARMORED SAINT
+ EXOGENOUS + VESTIGE
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THE OFFEN - 1950
November 2015
7th LEEDS - Carnation
@ University Union



www.metalblade.co.uk www.youtube.com/metalbladerecords
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ON THIS MONTH'S FEAR CANDY

BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS, HERE IN THE UK WE WILL ALREADY HAVE HAD THE DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL DOWNPOUR AND WE'LL [HOPEFULLY] BE EXPERIENCING THE START OF SUMMER. HERE ARE SEVENTEEN TRACKS TO MAKE YOUR SUMMER EVENINGS COMPLETE.



1. META-STASIS

'Disintegrate' from the Depraved Records album **'The Paradox of Metanoia'**
Having formed from the remains of Ted Maul and Sikh in 2012, this is a taste of the sick southerners second album **'The Paradox of Metanoia'** out later in July. Enjoy this thoroughly uncompromising six minutes of technical extreme metal.
www.Facebook.com/MetaStasis666

2. MY SILENT WAKE

'And so it Comes to an End' from the House of Ashes album **'Damnatio Memoriae'**
Ten years and eight albums into their gloomy gothic doomy career, My Silent Wake continue to make classy quintessentially British funereal music. This track is both heavy and intricate, contains some lovely guitar lines and haunting vocal melodies.
www.Facebook.com/MySilentWake

3. DEADSPACE

'The Promise Of Oblivion' from the self released album **'The Promise Of Oblivion'**
Coming from the world's most remote city, Perth in Western Australia, this disturbing and sometimes terrifying twisted post-black metal nightmare is the title track from their equally unsettling debut album.
www.Facebook.com/DeadspaceCollective

4. RUSTY PACEMAKER

'Made of Lies' from the Solanum Records album **'Ruins'**
This is the solo project of Rusty Hessel, who hails from Lanztenkirchen in Austria. The music is written and performed (except the drums) by Rusty himself. Combining classic elements with fluid and melodic guitar lines, **'Made of Lies'** is a palpable hit.
www.Facebook.com/RustyPacemaker

5. HELL PUPPETS

'Hail Satan' from the self-released EP **'No Strings Attached'**
Mixing punk, horror metal and a truly cheeky twisted sense of humour, Hell Puppets mix their catchy hook lines and mischievous mirth on this track which has one of the most bizarre mid-sections we have ever put on a Fear Candy CD.
www.Facebook.com/HellPuppets

6. PAPER DOLL DECAY

'The Hunted' from the Hidden Records EP **'Desolation'**
Influenced by Lamb of God and Meshuggah and with a vocalist who shows women can growl as harshly and brutally as any man, Netherlands Paper Doll Decay place very listenable death metal that have just the right mixture of technicality and driving rhythm.
www.Facebook.com/PaperDollDecay1

7. SUFFERANCE

'Homeless' from the Metal Mercenary EP **'Sufferance EP'**
Don't let the intro lull you into a false sense of security, this track gets going quickly and launches into almost five minutes of uplifting melodic post-hardcore from this Croydon quartet.
www.Facebook.com/SufferanceTheBand

8. Z'ELE

'False King' from the self released EP **'Voice From The Void'**
Z'ele are a progressive/math metal band who hail from Saratov in Russia. Although the music is technical with polyrhythmic complexity, the band know how to use space and let the music breathe, which adds a warmth to the music often absent from more technical metal.
www.Facebook.com/ZeleMusic



Artwork: KEN COLEMAN (WWW.ARTOFKENCOLEMAN.COM)

9. CSOD (CONSTANT SOURCE OF DISAPPOINTMENT)

'Sexsomnia' from the self-release EP **'Final Insult EP - Part 3 of 666 Trilogy'**
Blackpool thrash punks Constant Source of Disappointment provide an injection of energy to the second half of this month's Fear Candy and reference classic thrash and of course NWOBHM in this galloping piece of music.
www.Facebook.com/CSODUK

10. DONKERKARNUFFEL

'Zombie Clown Apocalypse' from the self-released album **'Zombie Clown Apocalypse'**
As if a zombie clown apocalypse doesn't sound like one of your worst possible childhood nightmares, London's Donkerkarnuffel demonstrate their twisted 'clowncore' in this frankly unsettling four minutes of ludicrously fun metal.
www.Donkerkarnuffel.com

11. IN-DEFILADE

'To the back of the head' from the Infanticide Records album **'Rulers of Famine'**
Comprising former members of Nile, Defiance and Vesperian Sorrow, In-Defilade produce technical yet brutal blackened death metal that showcases their musical lineage and talents. Great stuff!
www.Facebook.com/InDefiladeOfficial

12. THE DEAD XIII

'XIII' from the self-released album **'Catacombs'**
Manchester metalised horror punks The Dead XIII produce the sort of filthy rock 'n' roll your parents would have warned you about. Their music includes infectious grooves and catchy choruses, be sure to catch them on their coming tour.
www.Facebook.com/TheDeadXIII

13. KLOGR

'Breaking Down' from the Zeta Factory EP/Live album **'Make Your Stand'**
Proper nerds give their bands proper names, and these alt-heavy rocking Italians named the band for Weber-Fechner, a law relating the magnitude of a stimulus to one's perception, and just shows how quality metal can be interesting, fun and educational.
www.Klogr.net

14. ELECTUS!

'Rider', a self-released single
Hailing from Wolverhampton with the ambition to play their music all around the world, these classic rockers channel the spirit of all the great bands that make music what it is today. The band produce catchy music that you can enjoy, whether you like riffs, vocals or just a rhythm you can tap your foot to.
(Please note this is shown as track 16 on the CD)
www.Facebook.com/Electus.Official.UK

15. FACEGRABBER

'Broken Promises' from the self release EP **'self release'**
Hastings's Facegrabber were apparently formed by accident, and believe this thus proves the necessity of drinking. Their influences are definitely and defiantly late '90s/early '00s and their singer is called Dead Spoon, what more could you want?
(Please note this is shown as track 14 on the CD)
www.Facebook.com/FaceGrabber

16. THUUM

'Worthless' from the forthcoming self-released EP **'Through Smoke, Comes Fire'**
Bournemouth's Thuum are responsible with this interesting and inventive track for bringing some sludgy Southern rock to this month's Fear Candy. Only formed last year, it will be interesting to see how Thuum evolve their sound and musical direction.
(Please note this is shown as track 15 on the CD)
www.Facebook.com/ThuumUK

17. ENEMO J (FEATURING ELYNE)

'Miley Virus' from the Digital Media Records album **'Miley Virus'**
Having changed their sound again, hardening it up and bringing more brutality into the mix with influences of Sepultura and Rage Against the Machine, this is the title track from the band's new album, which is released in July.
www.Facebook.com/EnemoJ



ASHES OF CARNAGE



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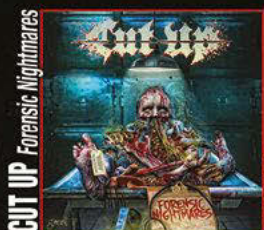
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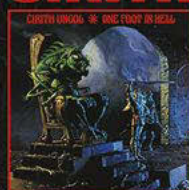


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CHOICE CUTS

BLOODY CHUNKS OF
THE CULT, THE KULT
AND THE FRESHLY DEAD



CLOUD RAT

“THAT’S WHAT THIS BAND MEANS: HOPE AND LOVE, EVEN AMIDST THE VIOLENT, OPPRESSIVE REALITY THAT WE ALL INHABIT”

“Dther goals? Piss off and fuel the haters. Are we a grindcore band? Are we a hardcore band? Are we emo? Are we politically correct elitist punx? Do we suck? Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. Also: No, no, no, no, no. Keepin’ ‘em guessing since aught-ten.”

The speaker in this instance is Cloud Rat guitarist, Rorik responding with tongue in cheek to Terrorizer’s query about the intentions of the Michigan natives heading into their latest full-length, ‘Qliphoth’. His reply is unexpectedly flippant, especially considering how he has helped steer Cloud Rat’s good ship grindcore through dire straits and good times. Rorik and his band mates (vocalist Madison, drummer Adrian and newest addition, Brandon on electronics) have maintained a serious, but inclusive, left-wing political stance and offered open compassion and vocal support for maligned segments of society. Additionally, they usually include a wealth of spiritual and mystical references in their lyrics and album titles and offer up intricate cover art in which viewers can get seriously lost in.

“We just wanted to write and create the best material we can,” he continues. “We wanted to build

upon our previous sound, stepping a bit outside the box while remaining firmly rooted in our grind/hardcore punk origins. Personally, I had a clearer idea of how I wanted the actual guitar/drums/bass tones to sound; big and heavy and clear. We’ve always been a bit more distorted and abrasive and I wanted everything to ring out loud and clear, while still remaining intense and energetic.”

Originally formed as a trio late last decade in the mould and spirit of bass-less wonders like Discordance Axis, Pig Destroyer and Gridlink, Cloud Rat have made impressive in-roads in the underground grind scene with a series of albums, splits and a philosophy that brings the noise to the kids, regardless of how small the venue is, and if there’s no stage, no fucking problem! Lest we forget the thought-provoking intellect permeating ‘Qliphoth’ and previous album ‘Moksha’.

“Initially, we were planning to call the album ‘The Killing Horizon’. The concept was basically that our earth has reached the point of no return – the event horizon. We had a whole vision for the idea, but then eventually decided to change it after concerns over the kind of hammy, super-metal sound of it – gotta

maintain our artsy-fartsy image, y’know? I originally discovered the word Qliphoth while reading a manga series called ‘Berserk’, in which the main character enters the realm and battles a powerful evil spirit. I see it as a metaphor for the world and our shared realities, as well as an allusion to Cloud Rat’s sound in general; generally dark, harsh and violent, but with glimmers of hope, light and melody as well.

“In the very beginning, we started this band for the sake of jamming some gnarly grindcore with friends,” Rorik concludes. “No long-term goals, really. Now, I think with everything we’ve gone through, experienced and created together, it’s become a pretty major part of our lives. We still feel pretty much the same about our ethics and politics. Most importantly, the relationships we’ve made with so many incredible people around the world are truly the driving force behind this band and our willingness to continue at the rate we have. I guess that’s what this band means to me now. Hope and love, even amidst the violent, oppressive reality that we all inhabit.”

KEVIN STEWART-PANKO

‘Qliphoth’ is out now Halo Of Flies
CloudRat.Bandcamp.com



THE EXPLODING EYES ORCHESTRA

"WHEN BUILDING A SONG, YOU BATTLE YOUR MIND FOREVERMORE"

As lead guitarist of Jess And The Ancient Ones (and guitarist of Deathchain) you'd think Finnish musician Thomas Corpse would have enough ways to express himself already. But the man now has another project, The Exploding Eyes Orchestra, which exists to explore a wide range of psychedelic sounds that don't necessarily fit his vision for the Ancient Ones.

According to Thomas, the music for his formative band's debut 'I' and its follow-up 'II' were both written in 2013 (to be released separately) and their creation was very smooth. "[The music for 'I' and 'II'] just came out really easily," he says, "and all in all it was a really relaxed period in time. I wish it would always be so easy! Sometimes, when building a song, you battle your mind forevermore. It's rewarding of

course, but can be a mental strain as well."

The Exploding Eyes consists of Thomas and numerous members of the Ancient Ones, including singer Jess, whose elemental bluesy tones work effortlessly with the heightened swirls of psychedelia heard throughout 'I' – a heady blend of Hawkwind, 13th Floor Elevators and The Doors together with numerous other classic rock, folk and doom influences from a bygone age. Thomas confirms that JATAO is the priority and that The Exploding Eyes Orchestra will exist during the former's downtime – but even though he clearly wants both bands to remain separate, does he see 'I' appealing to fans of the Ancient Ones?

"I think people who love the voice of the ever so wonderful Jess will find something to grasp on to here as well," says the guitarist. "Maybe the more metal people won't like this at all, but try and have open minds. You might be surprised."

When artists start new musical endeavours, the sounds and ideas explored in one band tend to impact the songwriting of the other – so, does Thomas see the Exploding Eyes' music affecting that of the Ancient Ones in the future?

"Hmmm, I have not thought of that," he admits, "but now that you ask... yes! In the most positive of ways, as music feeds music! So therefore, let's feed our minds!" ☺

DEAN BROWN

'I' is out now on Svart
www.Facebook.com/Pages/The-Exploding-Eyes-Orchestra



OHHMS

With just two tracks, upcoming record 'Cold' from Canterbury's sludgy OHHMS picks up where previous record 'Bloom' left off with vocals being an obvious difference. "Vocals are clearer, without being overly produced, the only studio trick we used was to double track me," clarifies frontman Paul Weller. "Anchor' is a song inspired by a Sea Shepherd Activist documentary I saw on YouTube and 'Dawn Of The Swarm' is about the potential extinction of the Honey Bee due to Colony Collapse Disorder, lyrics developed over a few months to include an occult sect of rebel bees that summoned an ancient wizard to help them fight their cause against man". Paul proudly states: "We want to do a trilogy of these long EPs, I always remember how mind-blowing it was hearing Sleep for the first time and how I never got bored; that's what I wanted to bring with OHHMS". [EB]

www.Facebook.com/OHHMSTheBand



HUMOURS

If you have ever wondered "What if King Crimson were on Amphetamine Reptile?", then guitarist Jared "Fester" See has the answer for you in the form of his band Humours and their EP 'The Onanist', bringing together players from the fertile Portland scene (including the splendidly named Mongoloid Village) in a meld of carefully balanced melodic progressive rock and out and out heaviness. "For us, there are two opposing motivations: the subversion of expectation and the payoff," Fester explains. "I think a preponderance of density in one section demands a corresponding dynamic shift somewhere else." With self-produced 'The Onanist' in the bag, work is beginning already on a full length. "We're going for a unified album, with transitional pieces," Fester reveals. "It's about unpunished crimes in a universe indifferent to suffering. So, you know, something positive for the youth!" [SJ]

www.Facebook.com/HumoursPDX



KINGS DESTROY

This Brooklyn doom metal cross-over combo does not hang about. Having spent the last two years since 'A Time For Hunting' criss-crossing highways and byways with the likes of Pentagram, Pelican, Vista Chino and many others, they've found the time to blast out a new album for our listening pleasure. "Ours is a collaborative process, and coming from five different heads it's hard to name names when it comes to influences," says guitarist Carl Porcaro, citing Entombed, Montrose and Helmet along a long list of inspirations. "We were inspired to be more open than on previous outings. As a result this album has some textures and tempos and rhythms that we have explored for the first time." With typical work ethic, they're already working on the follow-up. "We have not stopped writing since we started this band," Carl states. "Now we are already working on material for the next record." [SJ]

www.KingsDestroy.com

CHOICE CUTS

BLOODY CHUNKS OF
THE CULT, THE KULT
AND THE FRESHLY DEAD



GHOLD

"WE CAN'T STOP MAKING RECORDS!"

"It's the slow things that we enjoy to kind of melt minds. The speedy things come when we feel like it's right and [then] these daggers come at you from out of nowhere," Aleks Wilson, bass mastermind of "weight and grunt" duo Ghold outlines. "It's nice to lull people into a mouth-opened awed state and then everything becomes quite pliable there." Latest heavyweight long player 'Of Ruin' has certainly been melting faces recently and sees the duo – completed by drummer Paul Antony – further expand their sonic template that has roots all the way back to the halcyon days of college in Wimbledon in 2012. "Paul was working on a death metal project he was passing off as an artwork called Powerwolf, which I thought was amazing and hilarious," Aleks remembers. "I got chatting to him through that and we kind of realised we had a fair few musical influences in common. I started a band with another mate which was more on the lighter, psychedelic side of things

and we got Paul in on drums. When that fell apart me and Paul just stuck together."

From a mutual love of sharing music of all extremities, from Melvins to Darkthrone and beyond – "we just shared our music and it just broadened our influences and broadened the way we make music as a two piece" – Ghold was born as a duo, and remained one. "We started playing together thinking we'll get a band together, and started writing these songs ready, and keep me on guitar and Paul on drums. We did it like that, but then it's quite hard to find people to play the music we were writing. And on top of that the space we created in the bathroom was absolutely tiny, so there was no room for anyone else." Yup you read that right – they rehearsed in the only room available in their shared house. "I miss that place," Aleks reminisces with a smile. "The tiles say a lot about the bass sound as well. It bounces back [so] you've got a crispness you can't get in a wooden or fibreglass room."

With such a tight set up, it's not a surprise that three years on, long player 'Of Ruin' is meticulous as it is brutal and custom-built for the vinyl format. "When we were writing it we had plans for it to be a continuous record, so when Ritual Productions approached us we were totally over the moon, because their records are amazing sounding. Big tones abound with bands like Ramesses," Aleks beams. "The format always helps us determine how we want to put across the music. If it hadn't been a record and it had been a CD, I think we would have approached it a different way, but we were adamant this time it needed to be an LP." And even with the wax barely cooled the telepathic are already beavering away on the next album as Alekys says: "we can't stop making records!"

STEVE JONES

'Of Ruin' is out now on Ritual Productions
www.Ghold.co.uk



UNDERGANG

**"GOOD METAL IS ALMOST SOLELY
BASED ON GOOD RIFFS"**

Danish trio Undergang have been bludgeoning ears with a brand of death metal deranged and diseased enough to make even Chris Reifert grimace for a few years now, yet their upcoming third full-length 'Døden Læger Alle Sar' somehow steps the primitive heaviness up to sewer-smashing levels, a goal at the rotten core of their sound. "Undergang has always been driven by our passion for writing weirdly catchy heavy tunes and the fun we have playing the music together," says guitarist and vocalist D. Torturdød. "The music of Undergang is a picture of how we prefer our death metal; disgustingly downtuned, lowbrow, filth-ridden and pus-leaking!"

Yet, dwelling beneath the near-impenetrable battery of Undergang's sound lies the true mantle

of their song-writing, and subsequently what makes them so fucking great. The riff. "A lot of bands seem to prioritize other approaches to writing music than keeping in mind the power of a good riff," Torturdød goes on. "To me, good metal music is almost solely based on whether a band/song has good riffs or not. I don't really care about all that atmosphere-drenched death metal that gets a lot of attention these days; I really think they lack catchy riffs. In the end it's not really a competition, but we still intend on being heavier than thou!"

RICH TAYLOR

'Døden Læger Alle Sar' is out now on Dark Descent

www.Facebook.com/Undergangktdm



PROPHETS OF SATURN

Sounding like the bastard mix of Sabbath and the other heavy blues hitters like Blue Cheer and Cream, the Leicester stoner crew's new album 'Retronauts' could not be more aptly named. "Flarey hairy wizard doom!" is how vocalist George cheerfully describes their journey through time space and fuzz-soaked riffs. With their self-titled on tape, the next step was 'Retronauts' being on vinyl (via Helvisike), which George says "is the mark of us being a 'proper' band." [SJ]

www.Facebook.com/ProphetsOfSaturn



BLACK BOOK LODGE

Black Book Lodge's majestic new album 'Entering Another Measure' channels King Crimson, Ihsahn and Opeth through an ever changing emotional landscape – and only a year on from 'Tundra' too. "We're a productive band, and new material just seems to find its way constantly. So why not capture it?" guitarist/vocalist Ronny Jönsson asks. "Sometimes the material just dictates where it wants to go, forcing you to ignore your ego and let the ideas make the decisions." [SJ]

www.Facebook.com/BlackBookLodge



TJOLGTJAR

There are few solo black metal bands as inventive and downright bizarre as Tjolgjar. The brainchild of multi-instrumentalist J.R. Preston, the project is rooted in raw, primitive black metal, but also incorporates psychedelic rock, punk, bluegrass, NWOBHM and country; like if Captain Beefheart had recruited Von instead of the Magic Band. "Tjolgjar came out of rituals and being visited by beings that are living right outside of our mind's eyes. You have to understand that ten years of what most would term 'new agey' bullshit went into this project." He has no time for the Satanic approach of other black metal acts. "I think the timeline of black metal goes like this: Mercyful Fate – Tjolgjar. Mercyful broke real ground within the confines of the Christian Bible context, I broke ground outside of it. Twenty thousand other bands doing the Christian gimmick? Whoopee! So there's them, and there's me." [KW]

www.Facebook.com/Tjolgjar



CUT UP

Cut Ups' 'Forensic Nightmares' (Metal Blade) combines brutal, slamming death metal with an old-school vibe. "It's no coincidence that we picked 'Burial Time' as the first single, as we think it's a very good representative for the album. It's got the intense grind parts, the intense dual vocals and also a heavier middle part and slamming bass. We think it's a good way to present the album for the first time," says drummer Tobias Gustafsson. "It's one big punch in the face!" Without straying far from the genre itself, "the album is very intense, and has a lot of groove and catchiness, but, yeah, it's a very solid and strong death metal album." In order to mix things up a bit, "We also have some mid-paced stuff in there to get some diversity of sound in the album. The slower songs, I think, are hits. I'm looking forward to playing them live and see peoples' heads banging." [RR]

www.Facebook.com/CutUpOfficial



MORASS OF MOLASSES

From the depths of Reading oozes the sticky sludge of Morass Of Molasses, from a spontaneous meeting at a gig that sparked a writing process that heralded debut EP 'So Flows Our Fate'. The three piece are inspired by Led Zeppelin, Tool and Black Sabbath, to create what Bones The Beard on vocals and baritone guitar describes as "colourful divergent music that challenges expectations." Grab some sugar now and get really for the full length this summer. [SJ]

www.Facebook.com/MorassOfMolasses




Fall In The

From the frostbitten strains of 1994 classic 'The Principle Of Evil Made Flesh' through 'Nymphetamine's gilded flourishes into the thorny, brimstone-scorched throes of 2012's 'The Manticore And Other Horrors', few musical entities are more restless in motion and design than the notoriously chameleonic Cradle Of Filth. Etched in 25 turbulent years of drastic line-up reshuffles, backbiting, blasphemy and ambition, it's with ceaseless momentum that these influential aggressors have unleashed a consistent slew of blistering releases, each one unique yet instantly recognisable in flavour.

Forming the latest in a long line of gruelling trials and tribulations, the departure of long-time guitarist Paul Allender mere weeks ahead of their co-headlining tour with Behemoth at the tail end of last year triggered a seismic shift in the structural dynamics of the band. So while founding frontman Dani Filth is certainly no stranger to calamity, the sudden loss of a core writer and performer surely put inevitable strain on the creative process that followed? Not so, reports the veteran vocalist.

"It may seem like that to people outside the band, but in context it's really no different from someone trying to run a magazine or a football team, for example. Things just have to continue, the band has to evolve and it's not quite as cut and dry as going, 'Hey, there's someone over there. Let's get them into the band.' The people who join us are super-involved with everything the band does. As far as Paul's departure is concerned, I can't talk about it legally, really, but I will say that it was completely amicable. He moved to America and wanted to have the band lay low for a few years which, seeing as it's your living and your lifestyle, wasn't really an option for us. We also had the tour with Behemoth so it was a question of having to find someone to fill Paul's shoes, which we did after quite a spell. We found Richard Shaw, our current guitarist and then closer to the day we were struck by a second near-fatal blow in the fact that James Mclroy, our resident live guitarist who'd been suffering with a serious neck injury for several tours, had to undergo major surgery, so it was impossible for him to do. So we had to make a decision there and then, and luckily found a friend of

"WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GLORY DAYS? EV



INFLUENTIAL YET OPINION-SPLITTING. DIABOLICAL AND DIVINE. CHAOTIC YET RELENTLESSLY CONSISTENT. JUST A HANDFUL OF THE COUNTLESS CONTRADICTIONS THAT COULD BE APPLIED TO CRADLE OF FILTH'S CONSTANTLY MUTATING CRAFT. BUT DESPITE HAVING SPENT THE PAST QUARTER OF A CENTURY CONTINUALLY SMASHING BOUNDARIES, HEAD HELL-RAISER DANI FILTH REVEALS WHY IT'S BLUDGEONING NEWIE 'HAMMER OF THE WITCHES' THAT FORMS THEIR MOST ELECTRIFYING LONG-PLAYER YET.

Words: Faye Coulman

Martin's ["Marthus" Škaroupka] from the Czech Republic by the name of Marek 'Ashok' Šmerda, and we just had an absolutely amazing tour."

With these dynamic new axemen bringing electrifying chemistry to the mix from the earliest outset of their critically applauded live stint, it wasn't long before this last-minute line-up fix began to evolve into a fully functional creative unit. Abuzz with the unmistakable heat and spontaneity of these exhilarating performances, the inspiring smattering of early sketches penned throughout the band's extensive touring cycle saw members old and new lend their insight to a rapidly developing new record.

"It was bizarre," comments the vocalist of this game-changing reshuffle. "I know they were originally only filling in other people's shoes but since then it's blossomed into writing an entire album and it's been an enormous pleasure to work with them. We initially went to the studio and dropped three tracks that were fully written just so we could concentrate on quality as opposed to quantity, because nowadays every label demands that quick fix of loads of

tracks and stapling your new-born child to the front cover of every CD so that people feel like they're getting everything they can so they don't feel tempted to download it. But anyway, having new people in the band who haven't been through the trials and tribulations of being in Cradle Of Filth..." he pauses for a moment in contemplation. "There are dizzying highs – and obviously you can't get any higher than some of the things we've done in our field – and then some lows. But they haven't been through all that shit and so they've just got a pure view of everything so it was cool. A good injection of flesh blood."

But for all the crackling spontaneity and fresh blood that abounds in every opulent inch of 'Hammer Of The Witches', there's equally no overstating the pivotal role Cradle's historic roots played in informing this awaited new full-length. Together with retrospective nods to some of their most influential classics, the twentieth anniversary of iconic debut 'The Principle Of Evil Made Flesh' saw its creator delve still deeper into the dusty annals of history with a richly nostalgic reissue of 1992 demo 'Total Fucking Darkness'. Having been ►

EVERYTHING'S SO FUCKING BLAND NOWADAYS"

"I WAS THIS WEIRD CHRYSALIS ALL INTO A BIG HIDEOUS DAYGL

toying with the idea of such a project for some time, an inspiring reunion with founding guitarist Paul Ryan saw the pair instantly immersed in a long-forgotten age of unearthly magic and heady, adolescent energy.

"I'd just been reintroduced to Paul Ryan who I actually formed Cradle with back in sixth form in '91," Dani recalls. "He remained with the band until about '95 and I knew he'd gone off on his own path as a successful promoter and we'd sort of bumped into each other over the years but never really sat down. Then a mutual friend invited us for a curry and we just got on famously, and having become friends again, we had this idea to involve Nihil from Cacophonous Records who were responsible for our first two outings, and so we thought, why not? It was limited to about 15,000 copies, and then we did a really overly special box set that had so much in it that it actually worked out that they cost more to produce than it was to sell them. But showing people our humble origins really cemented that path back to the early days. It gave us a bit of a psychic kick as well, so I guess that in itself was also something that inspired the album, and gave it that little bit of that nostalgia."

With these varying strains of rejuvenated freshness, visceral nostalgia and diabolical vibrations coalescing to create a dynamic array of early sketches, the working title 'Hammer Of The Witches' figured prominently in the process from the earliest stages of the album's inception. Finding its writhing, brimstone-scorched roots in a notorious medieval text detailing instructions for the violent persecution

of witches, the album's overarching central concept features a fantastical rewriting of history that sees its ill-fated victims set about exacting revenge on their tormentors. Manifesting in a wealth of intricate lyrical threads and theatrical arrangements, Dani is quick to note how every aspect of this brutal and tautly interconnected body of work can be traced back to this fundamental theme.

"Hammer Of The Witches' first came about almost like 'Dusk And Her Embrace' did. Both of those titles – which draw a link with each album – were originally just working titles that grew into being the title track and



OVER WINTER THAT'S NOW EMERGED NOW-COLOURED BUTTERFLY"

because I'd slipped out to a few people on social media that the album was being done and we had a working title, people just fell in love with it. Some German guy thought that 'Hammer Of The Witches' was something to do with Nordic mythology and Manowar, obviously and some other people tapped into that Hammer House Of Horror vibe. I could've been all clever about it, I suppose, but sometimes you just have to run with something and see where it takes you. I mean, you don't name a child at birth and then when it gets to about two you go, 'You know what? I don't like that name anymore, I want something else.' I look upon all our songs as our children so it's very difficult to give them up. Actually, scratch that. I'd rather say bastard offspring, children's too polite a word for our music."

Having entered the remote rural quarters of Sussex's legendary Grindstone Studio in the suitably frostbitten depths of midwinter, the band set about streamlining this fertile slew of material under the expert direction of Cradle studio veteran Scott Atkins. Tailoring his intensive and fluidly organic engineering methods in accordance with the gnarly authenticity and grit that underlines this awaited long-player, the gruelling recording process that followed saw each musician pushed to unprecedented new heights of extremity.

"We almost had like a seventh member for this album in the shape of the producer Scott Atkins, and in fact his studio is quite aptly known as Grindstone because he quite literally puts you to the grindstone," Dani laughs. "Me and

him were putting in eleven-hour days for at least three months and it's a small studio, nothing really grandiose like the ones we used to waste a lot of money on. We literally just knuckled down, so having not been in the studio for a couple of weeks now, I suddenly feel like I was this weird chrysalis all over winter that's now emerged into a big hideous dayglow-coloured butterfly. But yes, Scott Atkins was really like our seventh member in the fact that he had a vision as well. So instantly we had to make a decision to cut seven tracks and to prove that things are a democracy and I'm not this cruel tyrant that beats people mercilessly, my actual favourite song was one of the ones we axed. And like I say, Scott pushed everybody, especially the guitarists who were there with tears in their eyes thinking, 'Oh my god, what the fuck have I got myself into?' I had to go and see my vocal doctor three times during the course of the thing because he pushed me too. He was like, 'I want you to scream like you did fifteen years ago,' and I was all, 'You're having a laugh, aren't you?' but he got it out of me. So yeah, we worked fucking hard and hopefully the album is testament to that fact."

From the battering, militaristic bombardment of 'Onward Christian Soldiers' and 'Enshrined In Crematoria's tautly aligned fretwork to the nocturnal flourishes of 'Right Wing Of The Garden Triptych', there's no mistaking the unearthly horrors that abound in this consummate work of wickedness. With the ancient, occult vibrations of Dani's native Sussex County having long been ingrained in his subconscious, ever-increasing twists of witchcraft and demonology quickly began to manifest during the writing process, infusing both music and lyrics with potent primordial magic. Flourishing in myriad shades of sorcery, blood-steeped revenge, holy war and hauntings, 'Hammer...'s overriding theme of persecution supplied its creator with a fertile wealth of lyrical elements. And despite being heavily entrenched in the historical detail and supernatural legends of bygone times, these medieval horrors are, according to Dani, altogether more relevant to modern times than first appearances might suggest.

"It is very much based in that Dark Age ideology," he observes. "There's a track called 'Onward Christian Soliders' which is inspired by the Crusades and despite those being hundreds of years ago and all our technological advances since then, we're still as spiritually invalid as we've always been. Considering the current tensions between Christianity and Islam and Judaism, it really hasn't advanced that much further since the Crusades so there's definitely connotations. There's also some Poe-esque horror tracks in there like 'The Vampire At My Side' and 'Blackest Magic In Practice', as well as sort of celebratory metal songs that take some of the aspects of paganism and witchcraft like 'Yours Immortally' and 'Enshrined in Crematoria'. It also references Ragnarök and Armageddon, and then there's 'Right Wing Of The Garden Triptych', which kind of surprised this German visitor who came to the studio. I think he was for Metal Hammer Germany and he said, 'What is this song? Right-wing?!' I said, 'Bloody hell, you Germans and your right-wing. Why do you keep going on about that?' 'Right Wing Of The Garden Triptych' is based on a Hieronymus Bosch painting, 'The Garden of Earthly Delights', to which he humbly apologised and so he should, he lost the war," Dani concludes with a devilish chuckle. ▶



"IT'S AS FRESH AS ANYTHING IN THE 'MIDIAN' AND 'CRUELTY AND THE BEAST' ERA"

With this innocent misunderstanding forming little more than a footnote in Cradle's heavily publicised history of blasphemous and explicit material ('Jesus Is A Cunt' t-shirt, anyone?), provoking controversy has long been a matter of course for Dani and co. Having once shamelessly revelled in outraging the religiously devout and easily offended in previous decades, today it's the more petty and unremarkable points of censorship that curtail the band's creative freedom. Drawing on classic Renaissance art themes that see a horde of woodland nymphs nakedly frolicking across its front cover, the recent backlash surrounding 'Hammer's...' allegedly pornographic artwork forms the latest in a long line of troublesome censorship issues.

"Much to my disdain, I actually just found out that a part of the booklet's been deemed pornographic, so some bright spark at the record company has decided to doctor one of the pictures slightly in order that we don't get deemed offensive material. Okay, the persecution themes in the booklet are pretty severe but they're essentially just neoclassical interpretations of what you would see in a medieval woodcut. They follow a specific theme,

with the artist using the female form as canvas for creation and he [the artist Arthur Berzins] was literally saying that if you went to the Prado museum in Madrid or the National Gallery, you would see portraits very much like this one and you wouldn't deem them pornographic. Having said that, I think our past precedes us in most respects so people automatically think the worst before they've even seen or heard it, which is good, we're not supposed to be a nice band after all. And to be fair, I'm actually sick of apologising to people or feeling guilty about different things. Do I really have to explain to people why we do certain things? At the end of the day, we're a heavy metal band and that's what we're fucking supposed to do. What happened to the glory days of like, W.A.S.P.? Everything's so fucking bland nowadays but ultimately, I think everybody's just worried because everything's on such a fine infrastructure. The music business is like a house of cards, and if someone's going to tip it, it's either going to be someone like a Slipknot or a Marilyn Manson where it tips well in their favour and everybody loves them for it, or it just pulls down all the record companies because people suddenly go, 'Right, we're not going to take any of your records and we're going to make sure that none of

the magazines do either,' so it is a really fine wire to walk."

But for all the music industry's ever-increasing abundance of red tape and corporate greed, it's precisely these many years of gruelling struggles and setbacks that have been so instrumental in the making of this enduring musical unit. Having gained immeasurable steel and stamina over the turbulent but richly prolific course of their two decade-plus career, 'Hammer Of The Witches' forms a towering testament to their continued musical vitality. And despite Dani's understandable disdain for the overhyped clichés that came with celebrating 'Principle...'s twentieth anniversary last year, the frontman is equally quick to acknowledge the undeniable wisdom they've accumulated over the historic course of their pioneering career.

"I'm like Peter Pan anyway in that I mentally have never grown up and the good thing about it is, we haven't really changed as people. Twenty years is fuck all in the grand scheme of things, and it really doesn't seem like that when you look back and analyse your career. I've always said that as musicians, because you spend such a lot of time on the road, it's almost like your time is suspended somehow. It's been a ride and one that's still continuing, and I think the album's proof of that, because if anything is to go by what other journalists have said, it's as fresh as anything in the 'Midian' and 'Cruelty And The Beast' era. You're talking fifteen years ago so I think that's pretty good and also, over the course of that period of time I've learnt to put up with all the allegations, the naivety and the idiocy and the love-hate relationship that the band seems to suffer with from fans and critics alike. All that just bounces off of us nowadays, it's quite fun."

'Hammer Of The Witches' is out on July 10 on Nuclear Blast
www.CradleOfFilth.com



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FOR VICTORY

HE TURNED DOWN THE CHANCE TO JOIN METALLICA AND HAD MIXED FORTUNES WITH ANTHRAX. BUT AS PERENNIAL UNDERDOGS ARMORED SAINT RELEASE THEIR LATEST ALBUM 'WIN HANDS DOWN', JOHN BUSH RECKONS HE'S FOUND A WINNING FORMULA

WORDS: STEVE BIDMEAD

They've been around forever, but L.A. old guards Armored Saint have not always received the recognition they deserve. The band's invigorating new album could see them finally lose their underdog tag – 'Win Hands Down' has got plenty of bite and is another landmark in the fascinating career of John Bush.

"We've never been the biggest band in the world," he says. "Selling a lot of records has never been our priority; it's about having fun. Maybe we're one of those bands who didn't get what we deserved – I don't know. Maybe that'll come later, maybe it won't."

Armored Saint have rarely been in the right place at the right time. "In the '80s, we were never a thrash metal band or a hair metal band, even when we had hair! We loved Aerosmith, Ted Nugent and bands from Europe such as Scorpions, but we were never influenced by fashions or trends and we didn't fit in anywhere. Even today, we never get played on rock radio and when I do hear a song it's like 'Oy, at last! Thank you!'"

For a band that has notched up seven albums (starting with 1984's 'March Of The Saint'), it is remarkable that 'Win Hands Down' sounds so fresh and energetic. This is perhaps their most experimental release to date, featuring Hammond organ, piano, female vocals, funky riffs and elaborate arrangements to supplement the muscular power metal.

"We approached this record with the mentality that we could do whatever we wanted. I think we're in a position to do that. And I'm going to pat myself on the back and say that we've made a really good record. Metal can sometimes be pretty reserved, but I'd like people to listen to our stuff and say, 'That's cool, that's different'. Because you have to adapt and change."

At the age of 51, Bush has seen a lot of changes in the industry, particularly with the

kind of technology available. "One of the biggest advances is having home studios, and that's very different to how we did it back in 1986. We worked on the new album whenever we could, fitting it around our family lives and work. I would go over to Joey's [Vera, bass] studio early in the morning, which was kind of weird. But when you're already awake and having breakfast with the kids at 7am, you're ready to do it. It helps that I'm not hungover these days as well."

Technology has transformed the music business during the years since Armored Saint started out 33 years ago. "I still like buying a record that you can hold in your hands," Bush says, "but I don't have a problem with people downloading music and choosing one or two songs from an album. What I don't understand about the modern music business, though, is why people complain about having to buy music. Music is something that artists invest their time, effort and money into making, so why does anyone expect to get it for nothing?"

Armored Saint's label since 1988 – Metal Blade – is thriving in this new era when others have folded, and Bush says that Brian Slagel's company feels like home. 'Win Hands Down' is an album that stays true to the band's (and label's) heritage of honest, high-quality metal while exploring new ideas, and this is also an intrinsic aspect of the singer's positive mentality.

"I love what I've done in the past. If it all ended right now I could look back with my head held high," he says. "I don't have dementia or Alzheimer's, so luckily I can remember it all. But I don't want to look back all the time; I want to go forward. A lot of bands try to make records that sound like they come from 1987. If that's what they want to do, fine, but what's the point? I want to keep evolving."

Thirty years ago, Bush was invited to join Metallica so that James Hetfield could focus on playing guitar. He refused, preferring to focus on

Armored Saint, the band he helped create with South Pasadena school friends.


Following the success of Saint's 'Symbol Of Salvation' album, Bush replaced Joey Belladonna in Anthrax in 1992, staying for thirteen years before Belladonna's return. It was an experience he thoroughly enjoyed, despite a mixed critical reception and souring relationships with other members.

"When I joined Anthrax, it was the beginning of the band's decline," he admits. "At that point in the '90s, heavy metal was changing. But we still had a lot of success and sold a lot of records. So from my perspective it was all gravy and I believe we put out some great albums."

"In a way, Armored Saint feels more like my own thing than Anthrax was, but I never had any issues with any of the guys in Anthrax and I thought we worked together pretty well. It seems like a strange thing for a singer to say, but I was playing a role in Anthrax and I didn't have any problem with that at all. Sometimes personalities click, sometimes they don't, but I feel good about the experiences I had. Charlie Benante is a really talented musician and Joey Belladonna is underrated for what he does."

Bush's brushes with glory have given him a circumspect outlook on life. "I don't know what success means in heavy metal today," he says. "A lot of bands you think are really big and doing well, they're struggling to get by."

In fact, success now starts a little closer to home. "I was in the car with my young son this morning and he recognised an Ozzy song on the radio, so that was cool, I was proud."

Bush can also be proud of 'Win Hands Down', an album featuring the kind of entertaining belters that radio stations ought to lap up. And that would be a well-deserved victory for these veteran underdogs. 

'Win Hands Down' is out now on Metal Blade
www.ArmoredSaint.com



“We approached this record with the mentality that we could do whatever we wanted”



"IT'S NICE TO DO THIS WITHOUT THE FREAK OUTS & MENTAL BREAKDOWNS"

THE JUGGERNAUT THAT IS HIGH ON FIRE IS BACK WITH NEW ALBUM 'LUMINIFEROUS'. AFTER A STINT IN REHAB FOR GUITARIST/VOCALIST MATT PIKE, DRUMMER DES KENSEL FILLS TERRORIZER IN ON THE CREATIVE PROCESS AND END RESULT IS A NEW, CLEAN CHAPTER FOR THE TRIO

WORDS: ROSS BAKER

"We got to a point when it became really difficult for all of us. Matt was starting to struggle and it was affecting every aspect of us working together."

High On Fire's drummer Des Kensel is recalling what life was like working in a band that was becoming increasingly dysfunctional. The wheels of the High On Fire juggernaut well and truly came off the tracks when they dropped off the 2012 Mayhem Festival in America in order for guitarist/vocalist Matt Pike to enter rehab.

"Rehab was hard for him but it has worked out for the best," Des continues. "Matt and Jeff [Metz, bass] are sober and I seldom drink. A lot of musicians say they need to be in an altered state of mind to be creative, but it's not going to work for thirty years! It's nice to do this without the freak outs and mental breakdowns."

The end result of tumultuous times can now be witnessed in album number seven, 'Luminiferous'. As mighty as you'd expect from the trio, it's the end result of the them jetting between Matt's studio in Oakland, California and Des's home in New Orleans before decamping to Massachusetts to again record with Converge axe man Kurt Ballou, someone Des and company trust implicitly.

"Kurt loves that loud raw tone. He works in the same vein as Steve Albini. He's an honest guy who has built a reputation for capturing a band's sound. He doesn't charge more depending on who you are. We are 99 per cent happy with everything. I don't think we have ever been 100 per cent happy with any of our records. I rarely listen to the albums after they're done because it always makes me think 'I could have done something differently!'"

Whereas it's predecessor, 2012's 'De Vermis Mysteriis', hinged on a concept referencing authors Robert Bloch, H.P. Lovecraft and Robert E. Howard's 'Conan' stories, at its core, 'Luminiferous' tackles political conspiracy theories. Earnestly urging that people remain sceptical when it comes to trusting those in authority, Des picks up an interesting tale.

"The banks own the politicians," he says. "In the US, congressmen are controlled by companies financially supporting them. The one per cent of society controls the other 99. It's certainly plausible that

families like the Rothschilds control the world with their wealth. You can fry your brain thinking about it. A friend of ours in Oakland who works for a lighting company got a job in the Redwood putting up lights and a stage in the middle of the forest. The company required he have a full background check before he carried out the work. It was so secretive. Apparently, it was for a pagan ritual out in the forest and several politicians were attending."

And while High On Fire's workhorse live schedule (rehab permitting) would suggest 'Luminiferous' should have been released earlier, Des is quick to point out that for the trio, quality over quantity is always a must.

"We try to pretend we are a productive band but we can't write on the road and need our down time," notes Des "We are our worst critics. We wrote a bunch of parts but we weren't happy so we had to redo some and work on the arrangements. Even if Matt hadn't been touring with Sleep we would have taken just as long." ►



"WE DON'T WANT PEOPLE COMING TO SHOWS TO LOOK AT BALDING OLD FARTS THAT CAN'T HACK IT ANYMORE"

Most significantly though, it's the trio's first album that sees Matt record without the demon juice.

"This is Matt's first recording sober. He used to do a couple of shots of whisky before he did his vocals," says Des. "We thought about letting him have a drink during recording as he was finding it really hard. We were concerned we would not get the vocals done on schedule. He went to an AA meeting to help get through that. It took serious balls for him to deal with things the

way he did. I haven't seen him around weed or alcohol in a long time. When you have all these different personalities in a band you have to know how to approach people. You can't come down like a drill sergeant; you have to show them support."

And so with the new album released, Des says he is looking forward to a continued and fruitful path once the album is released. Recent times, however, have allowed for adjustments to be made and he acknowledges that the group needed to

strike a balance between working and home life.

"We will still tour but we have had to cut back. We were getting burnt out being away from home and it was challenging for Matt and Jeff being sober. Matt hates flying too. We only do two to four weeks in a row now. We want to be enthusiastic

and look forward to playing for the fans and not saying 'fuck you guys, don't call me for a month'. We needed to have more time for family and other stuff. That said, if Matt fills that time off with Sleep then comes on a High On Fire tour getting all cranky then I am not too sympathetic! Sleep reuniting and doing some shows has allowed him to have more time being a professional musician rather than having to find other means of income between tours, so we understand he wants to do that. As long as we get a heads up and notice we can work around it. He does have a few whip marks on his back for when we need to motivate him!"

He concludes: "There needs to be a certain chemistry for a band to be successful. It's like a marriage. If we ever get sick of the sight of each other we will stop. As long as we can afford to tour and are making good music why stop? We have to be sure that the fans love it too. We don't want people coming to shows to look at balding old farts that can't hack it anymore." 🗨️

'Luminiferous' is out now on Century Media
www.HighOnFire.net



Photo by Tom Couture

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"THE NARRATIVE IS ABOUT SOMEONE WHO PUTS HIMSE

AFTER THE MAMMOTH PROG ODYSSEY THAT WAS 2012'S 'THE PARALLAX II: FUTURE SEQUENCE', IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHERE BETWEEN THE BURIED AND ME COULD TAKE THEIR INTRICATE SOUND NEXT. IT SEEMS THE BAND'S VISION STRETCHES A BIT FURTHER THAN WE'D EXPECTED, HOWEVER...

Words: Rob Sayce

The Parallax II: Future Sequence' was a watershed release for Between The Buried And Me when it was released in 2012. Stranger, more ambitious and greater in scope than anything they'd previously attempted – literally, at a monumental 72 minutes – it synthesised the myriad elements of their craft with absolute assurance. The album floored many and confused others, but it also left BTBAM with a problem: where, exactly, was left to explore?

An answer's arrived in the form of 'Coma Ecliptic'. The North Carolina outfit are returning with another labyrinthine concept record, though this time things

are a little different. As vocalist Tommy Giles Rogers explains, its episodic structure makes it less of a blockbuster, and more of a box set...

"I was thinking 'if I wrote a TV series, what would it be about?'" he recalls. "This concept was the third or fourth idea I came up with, and it clicked with all of us. The Twilight Zone was a big inspiration: stories that drag you along, where you never know exactly what's coming, how dark it's going to get.

"The narrative is about someone who puts himself into a coma, to travel through his past lives," enthuses the frontman. "He's looking for something

better than his real life, through all these wild scenarios. He goes to all these crazy worlds, and eventually ends up with a choice between life or death, later on in the story. At the end he realises that he's been in a coma the entire time. It's this series of tales about questioning reality, how much of it is actually true. Most importantly, it fit really well with the music. We want to take people on a different journey with each song, and sometimes it can be difficult to find lyrics that work with everything. This story goes to some heavy places, some mellow places... so it worked out perfectly."

'Coma Ecliptic' continues the group's embrace of progressive rock (of the old-school variety) alongside electronic and avant-garde music, with piano brought to the fore. It'd be an exaggeration to call this a wholesale redefinition, their extreme metal roots shining through here and there. But it's certainly taking them down a different path.

"We started writing a lot of these songs with the piano, for the first time ever," notes Tommy. "It's had quite an effect on the overall sound. I see this as a new version



TALES OF THE UN

LF INTO A COMA, TO TRAVEL THROUGH HIS PAST LIVES”

of us, something different. We never talk about or plan what we're going to do with a record, but we were united in not wanting to do a 'Parallax Part 3' this time. All of us were deliberately trying to do something other than the norm. 'Dim Ignition' for example is the first song in our whole catalogue not to have guitars on it, but it's a really cool moment on the record, and is still pretty heavy in its own way. We just found new ways to create our music.

"There was never a struggle for new ideas," he continues. "Every record feels like a breath of fresh air, to us at least, and we're very lucky to be able to experiment, try off the wall things. A lot of bands end up stuck with a certain sound, and it must be immensely frustrating. Everybody changes over time, so you want to reflect that in your music. Our fans expect us to expand our horizons with every single record, and we're very grateful for that."

While he's always been a versatile singer, Tommy's chameleonic performances on the likes of 'Famine Wolf' are striking. Inspired by his work on various solo projects, he's approached this album

from a drastically different perspective.

"I feel like my solo stuff's made me more comfortable as a vocalist," he relates. "I want to find a style that's right for each particular part. It's not about 'I want to scream more, or scream less' anymore. When you've been writing for over a decade, you develop a formula. Previously if I'd heard a metal part, I'd go for something harder: and I wanted to change it up this time. I brought some things out of me that I didn't know were there, always thinking 'what can I do differently here, is there a better voice I could use?'. It took a lot more time and analysis than usual, a lot of erasing and experimenting. Plenty of stuff didn't work, but it helped me learn a lot about my voice, and writing in general. I've really stepped out of my comfort zone, and there are some really unique moments along the way."

Just over thirteen years on from the release of their debut album, *Between The Buried And Me* remain a beguiling proposition. The metalcore influences fell by the wayside, they've dialled back the death metal, but the one constant is that you never know exactly what's coming next. In an era where many bands find their niche and cling on for

dear life, that has to be worth celebrating.

"Honestly, we have no concrete expectations for this record," Tommy admits. "There's always a little worry, but we'll just see what happens. We're all very different people, with very different ideas, and watching it all come to life is my favourite part of being in this band. Every record is a complete new journey, and we're still learning from each other. Hopefully that will never change."

And while the prospect of months on the road doesn't exactly thrill him, you can expect to see plenty of BTBAM in the near future. If everything pans out, we may not have to wait quite so long for a follow up.

"Touring is definitely a necessary evil for me, at this point," he concludes. "But it is what it is, and it needs to be done. I still enjoy performing a lot, and I'm trying to write more on the road, to use up that dead time. Overall, I'm feeling positive about everything that's on the way." 🎸

'Coma Ecliptic' is out now on Metal Blade
www.BetweenTheBuriedAndMe.com

EXPECTED

"I DELIBERATELY BUILT A DIFFERENT CONCEPT"

... SAYS JOHANNA SADONIS ABOUT HER NEW BAND LUCIFER WHO FEATURE ONE-TIME CATHEDRAL AXEMAN GAZ JENNINGS IN THE RIFF-SEAT. AFTER THE ABRUPT END TO THE RATHER SHORT-LIVED, HYPE-FUELLED THE OATH, WHICH COMBUSTED BEFORE THEY EVEN GOT OFF THE GROUND, THE SINGER IS KEEN TO MOVE ON A NEW COURSE.

Words: José Carlos Santos

"I'm flying to London tomorrow and I'm going to listen to the test pressing, I can't wait! That's when you really have your music, when you have it on a proper record," gushes Johanna Sadonis down the line from her hometown of Berlin, where she hasn't yet had the pleasure of holding the vinyl version of the debut album for her new band Lucifer, aptly titled 'Lucifer I'.

If we poor saps who can't play a note on any instrument to save our lives are excited when we get new vinyl from a cool band, imagine how jumpy Johanna is right now. Besides, unlike her previous band, the short-lived (yet fondly remembered) The Oath, Lucifer is still around – and will be – to reap the benefits of this hard labour.

"The Oath was supposed to be my band," the soft-spoken German vocalist says, still reminiscing about that difficult post-break-up period that anticipated the genesis of Lucifer. "I saw a future for that band and I had a lot of plans for it, so when it died, that was devastating for me. I thought I'd take all the negative energy of that moment and just move on, and create

something even more satisfying for myself. So I created the concept of Lucifer, and I didn't want to do the same thing again. I deliberately built a different concept – the bands are somehow related stylistically, but The Oath was more raw, leaning more of the NWOBHM direction, while with Lucifer I want it to be purely based on '70s heavy rock with a dash of doom."

Which succinctly describes essentially what 'Lucifer I' is all about. The dash of doom is dealt with a heavier hand than usual, however, due to the presence of a rather familiar name – Gaz Jennings. The former Cathedral guitarist seemingly hasn't had his fill of '70s-inspired doom bands with powerful frontwomen, and now he adds to his involvement in Death Penalty a capital role with Lucifer.

"We wrote the whole album together, Gaz and I," Johanna reveals. "For all the songs, I gave him directions, I told him what the concept was, and he asked me to give him a few references for each of them. We talked a lot about other bands, old bands, music in general... I could tell him I wanted a song with the same feeling as 'You Won't Change Me' from

Black Sabbath's 'Technical Ecstasy', for instance, I'd give him this sort of example and he'd send me a bunch of riffs and ideas for songs. Then I'd sit down with the stuff in Berlin, filter out the ones I thought were more suitable for Lucifer and we'd arrange the structure of the songs together. Then I'd write the vocal melodies."

A simple process perhaps, but its results seem to be exceeding the most optimistic of expectations, with the band already having played Roadburn and a gig with Pentagram, and are generally picking up new fans as if they're all being possessed by some occult force. Hey, maybe they are.

"I'm very grateful about the positive response we've had so far, but you can never take any of these things for granted," Johanna says carefully. "We need to have our feet on the ground, because we never know what to expect. I know I've been working with fantastic musicians – Gaz is one of the top guitarists in this kind of genre, and I'm just grateful for the good vibes we've had so far. For me it's been a turbulent and emotional year, full of hard work, so it's very gratifying to see it paying off." It's just a matter of carrying on, now.

"The other day when we were rehearsing for the gig with Pentagram, Gaz came up with a riff and the whole band jammed around it, I think there's a new song in the making there," she enthuses, a glint of 'Lucifer II' in her voice already. "We'll be stuck in a van for such a long time during our upcoming US tour, so we'll use that time to write more stuff! I named the album 'Lucifer I' for this exact reason. I don't want to repeat the history of The Oath. Music has been my life for over twenty years, and Lucifer is the band that fulfils me the most. I want to keep returning to the studio and to the stage with it as often as I can." ☘

'Lucifer I' is out now on Rise Above
www.Facebook.com/LuciferOfficial



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“IT’S DEFINITELY FEELING LIKE THINGS ARE FALLING INTO PLACE”

SO SAYS JON DEHART, FOUNDER OF FIGHT AMP ON THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF BEING IN ONE OF AMERICA’S FINEST NOISE ROCK TRIOS. OH, AND ON THEIR SPANKING NEW ALBUM ‘CONSTANTLY OFF’

Words: Kevin Stewart-Panko

Since 2003, Fight Amp (a.k.a. Fight Amputation) have existed in various permutations. The proverbial revolving door of membership has seen the band present as both a trio and quartet (there may have even been a short quintet stint in there as well). Still, none of this has stopped them from issuing at least a dozen releases via half as many labels, racking up countless tour miles and making the short uproot from southern New Jersey to their present-day Philadelphia home a couple years back. Throughout it all, the constants have been founders Mike McGinnis (guitar/vocals) and Jon Dehart (bass/vocals) who’ve nursed the band from its infancy and guided the punky noise rockers through sky-high highs and shit-stained lows.

“Looking back,” begins Dehart, when asked about how Fight Amp 2015 differs from previous versions, “I can see we had goals in mind, but we just didn’t know how to go about them. We had this phase early on where we would do these seat-of-our-pants, DIY tours because of our idolisation of Black Flag. On the one hand, they were really good experiences and I’m glad we have that in our background, but at the same time, there are a lot of things we probably should have said no to or hesitated on doing. In the last handful of years, we’ve learned from the Fugazi chapter in the ‘Our Band Could Be Your Life’ book about the power of

saying ‘no’ and not being so gung-ho. We have the same goals, but we know how to go about achieving them now that we’re not so young and green.”

Helping out immensely is the fact that once any band has some measure of internal stability, everything else has a better chance of properly falling into place. Think of the disarray that even the biggest bands of our generation (i.e. all of The Big Four) have experienced at the hand of roster uncertainty. To that, Dehart reports that the mood within the Fight Amp camp is the best it’s ever been with everything steadily moving upward. So much so that forthcoming EP/mini-album/full-length – pick one! – ‘Constantly Off’ (“It’s only six songs and twenty minutes, but it’s some of our strongest stuff, so we just called it an album!”) was the first time they felt as if they were writing as a unit.

“Our drummer Dan [Smith] originally was a fill-in for a Weedeater tour in 2011, while we were writing [previous album] ‘Birth Control’. We wrote half of that with Dan and half with our old drummer as he was working his way in, so it’s been a solid two-and-a-half years. This time around, all three of us got to start from scratch and create this cohesive thing together. It’s definitely feeling like things are falling into place.”

At the same time, that’s not to say there weren’t incidences of members temporarily falling off the

shared same page. But, as Jon reports, any rehearsal room conflict and tension was endured in the name of the greater good that became ‘Constantly Off’s combination of esoteric noise rock and sludgy D-beats.

“Before, everybody was trying to contribute and throwing ideas out there kind of wildly. When we were writing the new songs, Mike would usually be the one coming up with the embryo or beginning phases of a song and I would fall more into handling the lyrics, vocals and vocal patterns. That’s not to say it’s not a democratic process, but it felt like it went a lot smoother. We all still write riffs and lyrics, but there’s less of everyone trying to do everything at once. It’s still three opinionated people who still want to have their say, so the writing process can get kind of tense; not in a bad way, because what we found is that it’s nice having three people who feel strongly about what they want to do and not having that one apathetic person who’ll just go along with whatever. That struggle can be harder, but in the end we know we’ll all be truly happy with the way the songs come out.”

‘Constantly Off’ is out now on Brutal Panda Records
www.FightAmp.com

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KILL YOUR

Perennial oddballs KEN mode have always seemed like square pegs in extreme metal's round hole, with their jarring, dissonant sound drawing heavily from hardcore, metal and noise rock without ever really fitting comfortably into any of those genre's accepted tropes.

"Historically, we loosely got a noise rock term thrown at us, but we were always a little bit too hardcore or metal for most of the noise rock purists, and were always a little too noisy for most of the hardcore or metal purists, so we just never really fit in anywhere," agrees frontman Jesse Matthewson. "I guess with this record we are taking a bit more of a stance, that this is much more like classic '80s indie/noise rock, so it'll be interesting to see how it's received. So far it's been pretty OK, I've seen a couple grumbings from people who liked some of the more hardcore stuff, but yeah, everything's yet to be said at this point!"

The record in question is 'Success', the band's sixth outing to date, and their first to dispense with the more overtly metal trappings of their previous records to hone in on that dry, acerbic snarl that typified the likes of The Jesus Lizard, Scratch Acid and Big Black.

"It was more just embracing that sound, it's always been an element of the music we put out," argues Jesse. "Whether or not people actually noticed it or not was another thing, I think people tended to focus more on the hardcore and metal side. I think a lot of our songs were very much noise rock songs, it's just people didn't always understand that's where we were coming from, and with this one we kinda hit the nail right on the head, especially having Steve Albini record it."

Of course, the irony that something like noise rock – which blossomed out of a desire to strip away, skewer and subvert rock's more traditional characteristics – has now become an accepted genre in its own right, with its own set of both defining features and boundaries, is not lost on Jesse.

"I'd like [the definition of noise rock] to be more open, but at the same time the fact that people are starting to recognise it more as a genre is kinda cool, and I think with the success of bands like METZ and Pissed Jeans, people are actually starting to pay attention to noisier bands and understand the categorisation, which can't be a bad thing," he says – although he still has no time for the noise rock purists out there (a contradiction in terms, surely?). "Yeah, people like to do that with everything," he chuckles, before adopting a mocking tone: "This is *not* noise rock!" K, sure, whatever. I don't care, call it whatever you want. Call us the sludgelords for all I care!"

"I've been getting a lot of very bizarre Shellac comparisons with the two tracks we debuted," he continues, "which, personally, I don't think makes a whole lot of sense, other than I'm not screaming like a hardcore singer. I don't think the songs sound like Shellac at all, but that's just me."

It's an all too easy comparison to make, especially given Albini's presence, but one that doesn't fully capture the essence of this new record. The churning grooves of opening track 'Blessed', for example, have more in common with Godflesh than they do with God Bullies.

"I'm glad you actually hear that," Jesse smiles, "because I felt that

that song was very much like Cop Shoot Cop, Godflesh and the Swans but when people started saying 'ah it sounds like Shellac on steroids!'" He pauses for a second, before laughing, "I mean, I'll take it, but that's totally not where we were coming from!"

Plus, as an added bonus for noise rock connoisseurs, 'Blessed' also features the distinctive howl of Oxbow's Eugene Robinson.


"While we were writing 'Blessed', we had this idea where it would be cool to have someone like him contribute vocals to this section where it would build, and it just so happened that the pieces fell into place that we could execute it exactly the way we wanted to. I felt lucky, we had that idea and we pitched it to him and he was immediately on board, so that worked out perfectly."

It's not the only guest appearance to add a spot of colour to the record either; just check out Jill Clapham's call-and-response vocals in the chorus of 'These Tight Jeans'.

"That was just an idea I had after demoing that track, that it would be cool to have a woman's voice do kind of a good cop bad cop with me on that one. She's been a friend for years here in Winnipeg, and she jumped at the opportunity to be on the record too."

The song's gleefully sardonic refrain is definitely one of the album's highlights – a barbed attack on the internet generation who feel the need to clog up comment boxes everywhere with as much vitriol and negativity as they can possibly muster.

"I think to a certain extent it's the anonymity of it all, and the more popular and widespread the internet gets, the more we see these people coming out of the woodwork," Jesse sighs. "Maybe it also has to do with other entertainment avenues drying up, or just people's general lack of activity. The less people have to do in their lives, the more they seem to be shitting on people on the internet, or just in general, and I think that's a major problem; people need to get active, they need to do something, they need to keep their minds busy, otherwise shit like this happens."

"The general concept of the entire album is circulating around the Western ideal of success, and where people reach it, fall short, what people's expectations are and just the vast relativity of the entire concept itself," he elaborates. "It's such a broad subject that you can kind of throw anything under that carpet, and that's what we liked about it, that you could really talk about damn near anything if you want to. We've tried to loosely create a theme after the songs were already done on previous records, but this one, we very much came into it with this in mind. We had the name and the concept of the album before we even started writing any of the songs, so it was cool that we got to build this from the ground up. Especially even having Randy Ortese, a really good friend of ours, do the artwork, and he was building the concepts along with us from the ground up too, so it very much is a concept album for us, and having all the various pieces on board to build it with us was really, really cool." 

'Success' is out now on Season Of Mist
www.Ken-Mode.com

"The less people have to do in their lives, the more they seem to be shitting on people on the internet"

IDIOLS

FOR OVER FIFTEEN YEARS, CANADIAN NOISE MAKERS **KEN MODE** HAVE EXISTED IN THEIR OWN LITTLE SPHERE, CRAFTING BLUDGEONING YET INTELLIGENT MUSIC THAT STRADDLES THE DIVIDE BETWEEN METAL AND HARDCORE. FOR ALBUM NUMBER SIX, HOWEVER, THEY'RE HARKING BACK TO A MORE VINTAGE NOISE ROCK SOUND...

WORDS: KEZ WHELAN





THE HORROR!

LAS VEGAS'S DEMON LUNG HAVE UPPED THEIR GAME ON THEIR SECOND ALBUM 'A DRACULA' AS FRONTWOMAN SHANDA FREDRICK AND DRUMMER JEREMY BRENTON TELL TERRORIZER, AND THE RESULTS ARE FANG-TASTIC

Words: **Kevin Stewart-Panko**

I think it's the best of the '70s post-'Exorcist' possession films, and I didn't discover it until about fifteen years ago. It always stuck with me because there's something magical about it. Underneath all the blood and shrieking, it's a love story – albeit a pretty fucked-up one – and [vocalist] Shanda [Fredrick] really wanted to bring that part to the front. She lobbied hard to write the record around it and once we got started, we realized pretty quickly it was working well."

Demon Lung, the Las Vegas "really slowed-down" doom quartet who issued their 'The Hundredth Name' debut barely two years ago, have just returned with second album, 'A Dracula'. And, as drummer Jeremy Brenton alludes to above, the album takes thematic inspiration from 1978's 'Alucarda', a horror flick that tells the story of two orphaned teen girls wrecking havoc after demonic possession.

"Our last album was written from a male perspective, so this time around I was interested in telling a story with a female protagonist," says Shanda about the movie's influence. "The writing of this album also coincided with an interesting time in my life where I was more willing to connect with what we were writing. I think that could be said about my band mates too. We are all getting a little older and are experiencing all that comes with that."

"We always try to match each riff and melody to the mood of that particular part of the story," continues Jeremy about creating one's own work in the shadow of another piece of art. "It's really geeky, but ultimately just a tribute to the film. It's a combination of Maiden and King Diamond's writing styles. I always looked at the way that Iron Maiden made musical versions of films and books and King's flowing, complete stories per album. We are lifelong horror nerds, so it's what we wanted to do from the beginning."

Recorded with Billy Anderson in the producer's chair, 'A Dracula' sees the band unified with a greater understanding of the game around them. Quickly going from a demo band whose sole intentions were local gigs to juggling contract offers and joining the Candlelight roster alongside Orange Goblin and Winterfylleth, Demon Lung have experienced a rapid education in life beyond stringing riffs together in a rehearsal room.

"When we started, we had no expectations other than to play shows in Vegas," recalls Jeremy. "We were just playing what we wanted to hear and made a demo just to have something recorded. When it started getting reviewed, we started getting offers and had no idea what the fuck to do. We met Marco Barbieri of Century Media early on when he booked us on a Pentagram show. So we called him

up months later and said "We have these offers and don't know what to do. Will you help us?" and he totally did. A lot of labels just wanted a new 'female-fronted' band on their roster and didn't get what we were doing. Candlelight has a certain amount of integrity and seemed genuinely interested in us for the right reasons, so it wasn't a difficult choice. We had no idea what to expect, honestly. It was unbelievable at first and took the entire cycle of the first record to understand the ins and outs of how it all works."

"I wanted to be a lot more involved this time around," picks up Shanda about the new album's creation. "Our last album was the first 'real' album I had ever worked on and it was pretty intimidating. I was focused more on getting it done and not fucking up than the creative aspects. This time around we wrote the album in a shorter amount of time but spent more time in the studio. We had a whole other concept before we settled with the 'Alucarda' story. So, we wrote the album in six weeks, which is pretty crazy! But I actually think it worked out because we didn't have time to dilly-dally. The album is pure emotion; we had to get shit done and didn't have time to overthink it." 🐾

'A Dracula' is out now on Candlelight
www.DemonLungBand.com

"OUR LAST ALBUM WAS WRITTEN FROM A MALE PERSPECTIVE, SO THIS TIME AROUND I WAS INTERESTED IN TELLING A STORY WITH A FEMALE PROTAGONIST"



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ALL THE LESSONS



MELBOURNE'S KING PARROT HAVE DELIVERED A SAVAGE RECORD IN ALBUM NUMBER TWO 'DEAD SET'. FRONTMAN MATT YOUNG TALKS ABOUT CLEANING UP, WORKING WITH PHIL ANSLEMO AND PAYING HIS DUES

Words: Ross Baker

I needed to make that sacrifice. I had always played in bands but touring and recording at this level had always eluded me because I put drinking and taking drugs first. I know what the fuckin' drugs and alcohol do to me. If I was still doing those things, I wouldn't be alive, never mind singing in King Parrot." Matt "Youngy" Young is recounting how he changed his life around in order to ensure that his band had a proper chance of survival and exposure.

"Being involved in an industry that revolves around getting trashed can be challenging," the frontman admits. "One of the bravest things a guy can do is have the guts to put their hand up and say 'I'm fucked'. In Australia, we still have this macho culture of stereotypical men who never accept help until they die. My addiction was going to kill me."

Three years on the 'straight and narrow', Youngy is now focussed and running the business side of his band, and during the recording of the Melbourne crew's second album 'Dead Set', he was able to seek support from his label boss and producer – Phil Anselmo.

Of the recording experience, he says: "There was no one better to help develop our sound. He has so much experience working with great producers which has stood him in good stead. He understands where we are coming from and has a great sense of humour. He's been a great mentor to us. If we'd have had the success he did back in his twenties I would have pissed it all away and died. He's had his issues and come out the other side. His Nodferatu's Lair oozes character, it's so secluded and allows you to really concentrate. Phil helped me structure my vocal patterns and was telling me about how he used all these different techniques on the Pantera albums I grew up listening to! He's a unique character. We watched a bunch of horror movies together after recording. We watched a lot of boxing and he offered to spar with me but I wouldn't take him on, he's a fuckin' beast, I'd last about two seconds!"

The end product stands head and shoulders above the band's debut and Youngy is proud of what they have achieved.

"I think it shows how much work we put into it," he says. "There are new riff styles and tempos and I tried to vary up the vocals a bit. We still have all our trademarks but dynamically we have grown as a band. There are more hooks for people to sink their teeth into. We had three weeks to pre-production and record, which was a luxury compared to the first record. The vocals on the first album weren't going to sound the way they did but my voice got a lot higher after I stopped smoking."

"We wrote the album in a barn in Vermont totally out in the sticks with no one to disturb us. The album

is born out of frustration. Anything that was pissing me off I just let it all flood out. Some songs are fictional stories and others are very real. Whether it's me staying sober and the pressures I see around me or the shit that goes on in society, I just have to vent!"

One of those issues addressed is the issue of homelessness in the song 'Home Is Where The Gutter Is'.

"There are a shitload of homeless people in Melbourne and it's a problem that our government are not addressing. The video shows a guy who is sick of being beaten on by the man. Let's face it; who wouldn't like to piss in a policeman's mouth? Police and parking inspectors are arseholes at the best of times. I hope the videos make people think as much as laugh at them. That dipshit Tony Abbott [Australian Prime Minister] is turning Australia into a Police state. Parking fines are out of control. The video we did for 'Shit On The Liver' was a dig at that. I have been back in Melbourne for less than a week and I got a 148 dollar fine, there are speed cameras everywhere and people get fined for putting their feet on the seats on the train. It's absolute bullshit. I sometimes think about moving out to the bush to get away from all of it."

With the album out, Youngy is now hopeful that the 'Parrot will be able to continue building the foundations of what has been a long haul over the past few years.

"Some people may think that as this is only our second record but we are all in our thirties and have been around the traps," the frontman notes. "We

have all been at this a few years in different bands struggling and playing shitty venues. We have had great opportunities to tour with Down and the guys from Orange Goblin but

stuff like that has only happened recently. After this interview, I am going round the town putting up posters for our next show here. You can't leave other people to do these things in case they don't get done. Melbourne has a great music scene but people are so spoilt for choice when it comes to having lots of international bands touring. When we started out, local bands were pretty much ignored. We quickly decided we weren't going to let ourselves be forgotten, so I'd jump in the crowd and smash the shit out of people. I'd knock beers out of guys' hands and you'll be surprised how pissed off people got! I was being an annoying cunt but I wanted us to get the attention and respect we needed so we forced them to give it to us, ha-ha!"

'Dead Set' is out now on Agonia Records
www.Facebook.com/KingParrotBand

"Being involved in an industry that revolves around getting trashed can be challenging"



STILL

PHOTOGRAPH BY
BEGGARS



"PEOPLE KEPT COMING UP
WITH THE TERM STONER
ROCK AND I COULDN'T
UNDERSTAND"



SHINING

THEY WERE ALMOST LUMPED INTO THE STONER ROCK SCENE OF OLD, BUT THERE WAS ALSO A DIFFERENT VIBE TO SPIRITUAL BEGGARS THAN JUST TOKE-FRIENDLY RIFFS. AS THEIR FORMER LABEL DUSTS OFF SOME CLASSIC ALBUMS FOR RE-RELEASES, FORMER FRONTMAN CHRISTIAN "SPICE" SJÖSTRAND RECALLS THE 'CLASSIC ERA' OF THE SWEDISH RETRO-ROCKER'S VOYAGE.

WORDS: JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

Spiritual Beggars are still going strong to this day, holding the bright orange flame of the fuzzy '70s high and proud, but their equally indispensable – and highly influential for the current retro fixation – history is what their current success is based on. And now, after almost two decades, Music For Nations will give us the opportunity to relive the golden period of the Swedish band led by Michael Amott as it was meant to be heard all along. That's right, the 1996-2002 era of the band, comprised of the 'Another Way To Shine' (1996), 'Mantra III' (1998), 'Ad Astra' (2000) and 'On Fire' (2002) albums, is getting the vinyl treatment. Only 'Ad Astra' has previously been issued in the most vintage of formats, but now all of them will be available in their crackly glory, complete with new artwork and everything. This has gotten us on such a Spiritual Beggars kick that we immediately rang up old vocalist Christian "Spice" Sjöstrand to reminisce with us.

"It was a very long time ago!" he says with a full laugh when prodded for his spontaneous, unfiltered thoughts upon looking at these old records again. "I'm proud of that period of my life, there were great moments, a few bad moments too, but overall the memories are good," says Spice, who left Spiritual Beggars in 2001, therefore leaving 'On Fire' as the odd man out in this collection, as it features Grand Magus' JB Christoffersson on vocals. So that's the one we'll get out of the way first, to purge any bad feelings Spice might have towards it. Fortunately, he doesn't. Not much, anyway.

"I listened to it when it came out, just once," he remembers. "I thought it sounded like... not Beggars. I don't want to put the guys down, but it was more like Bad Company. I understand now that it was meant to be Michael's solo album, so I can understand how it's different."

Did it make the decision of leaving the band seem like a mistake at the time?

"For the first couple of years afterwards I thought sometimes that I might have made the wrong decision," the singer admits. "But not today."

Okay, so what's his favourite of the remaining three?

"For me, my favourite has always been 'Mantra III'," he reveals without hesitation. "It was a fun album to record – it was the last time I recorded bass live. It was just me and Ludwig [Witt, drummer] who recorded live. The feeling I got



from that was great, as was from all the album, it was really fun writing those songs, we jammed them quite a lot." Jamming ended up being the band's main (and only, just about) method of writing, though it wasn't like that in the beginning.

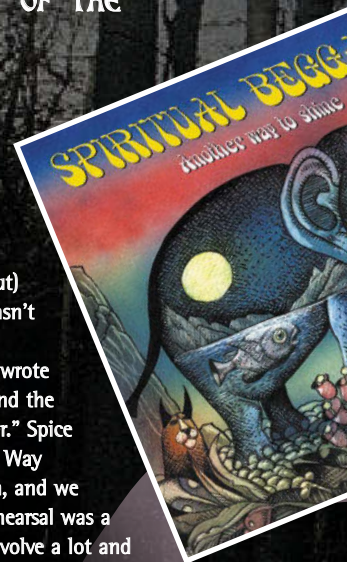
"On the first self-titled EP, I wrote two songs, Michael wrote one and the other three we wrote all together," Spice recalls. "It was only on 'Another Way To Shine' that we started to jam, and we jammed a hell of a lot. Every rehearsal was a jam session, and that made us evolve a lot and get better and better. When we reached 'Mantra III' and 'Ad Astra' we were a very energetic team."

So 'Another Way To Shine' is a sort of stepping stone? Spice is not sure. He doesn't remember, you see.

"I wasn't feeling at all well when we recorded it," he says. "I had a lot of personal issues going on, so it was a kind of nightmare for me. A lot of drugs involved, so I can't remember all that much of the recording, to be honest," he says with a big grin, so at least he can laugh about it now, which is good. "I can remember small details, but I have trouble with the overall picture. Still, that album has a very cool vibe to it, it's just kind of dark for me because of the state I was in and the whole context around it. But we were much better as a band for 'Mantra III', and especially for 'Ad Astra'."

Yeah, 'Ad Astra' seems to be the usual pick for the fans, and for good reason. A good part of the band's most emblematic songs are on it – if you did a poll among all Spiritual Beggars fans, we'd guess 90 per cent of them would take this one to the proverbial desert island.

"It wasn't as fun to record as the previous one, but I know it was a very good album," Spice offers. "It has some fucking great songs on it! We took a lot of care with the production and with a lot of details, there was a lot of planning involved, and quite some time before we recorded it we already knew the album was going to be really good." ►



"WHEN WE STARTED I WAS A BLACK SABBATH GUY, LUDWIG WAS THE LED ZEPPELIN GUY AND MICHAEL WAS THE DEEP PURPLE GUY"

Also, for a supposedly retro rock band – which incidentally, was the moniker attributed to them at the time, before the hideous "stoner rock" tag became a thing – their members have always been surprisingly open to influences from other genres, as Spice readily admits.

"For me, the influences were changing all the time during this period. I'm always picking up cool new bands here and there and my listening habits are constantly changing. Which is good, because I always try to evolve my writing, and I like to see new and different angles on what I listen to, including music that isn't rock or heavy metal. I listen to something that's totally different from what I do, and my thinking is that I can look at music from that perspective too and incorporate it in my writing. When we started I was a Black

Sabbath guy, Ludwig was the Led Zeppelin guy and Michael was the Deep Purple guy. I was a huge Slayer and Megadeth fan as well, Michael liked the harder stuff. We both came from a more metal background, while Ludwig was always the retro guy."

So where did the stoner rock thing come from?

"We were always called retro rock," he confirms. "The first time I recall hearing the stoner rock label was when we were on tour with Fu Manchu in 1998. People kept coming up with the term stoner rock and I couldn't understand. I was like, do you mean dope? Huh? I still don't like that label. Now everything is stoner rock. I read somewhere that Tom Petty is stoner rock the other day. Holy fuck!"


Johnny Cash will be stoner rock soon, just you wait. Whatever you call them though, it's clear these records are extremely important, so how much of them is embedded in Spice's DNA, in his own projects today and his post-Beggars musical career?

"I don't go back and analyse them, but it's in my backbone," he reflects. "Especially with my solo band, Band Of Spice, there's hints of it there, but it's me writing songs, I write in a special way so it's natural that it'll sound like me. But I've never gone back specifically to try to capture anything, like 'how did I do that on 'Mantra III'?', or something like that."

Of course, a big reissue effort like this always raises a question – what about a reunion, even if just for a one-off, to give everyone a proper live taste of these songs that sound so kickass on vinyl? Surprisingly, Spice leaves everything open.

"I could see myself playing with the guys for a festival or something like that, as a sort of celebration. Not for tours and stuff, not full time again. Never say never, but yeah... I wouldn't say no to some special thing." Festivals and

guys in Spiritual Beggars – take note. Call the man. Finally, we asked Spice to describe each of the albums (excluding 'On Fire', naturally) with a single sentence. 'Another Way To Shine'? "Depression and rock and roll." 'Mantra III'? "Total joy." 'Ad Astra'? "Perfection."

That sounds just about right. 

The reissues of 'Another Way To Shine', 'Mantra III', 'Ad Astra' and 'On Fire' are out now on Music For Nations

www.SpiritualBeggars.com



DEBAUCHERY

F*CK HUMANITY

The new and 9th album by the German death metal warmachine **DEBAUCHERY!**

Available as CD, limited edition 3-CD digipak with 2 bonus CDs and as limited and numbered gatefold vinyl LP.

The previous album „Kings Of Carnage“ reached #62 of the official German album charts!
Recorded at House Of Audio Studios with Dennis Ward (Unisonic, Krokus).
Cover artwork by Adrian Smith.

IN STORES:
July 10th



MAS CD0986 / MAS DP0986 / MAS LP0906

CRYSTAL BALL

LIFERIDER

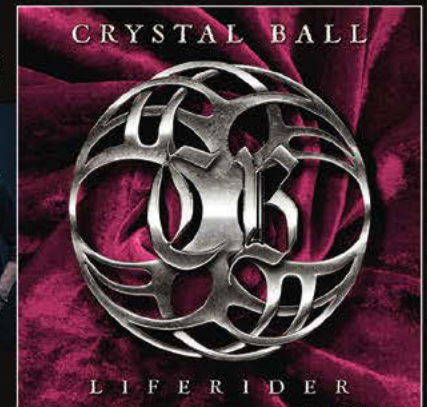
The new and 8th album by the Swiss melodic metal gods **CRYSTAL BALL**

Available as limited digipak with three exclusive bonus tracks and as jewel case CD.

Produced, mixed and mastered by Stefan Kaufmann at ROXX Studio in Solingen, Germany.

Cover and artwork design by Thomas Ewerhard
(Kissin' Dynamite, Shakra, Rage, Avantasia, Volbeat, Edguy u.a.)

Guest appearances by Battle Beast's Noora Louhimo and Stefan Kaufmann (ex-Accept, ex-U.D.O.)



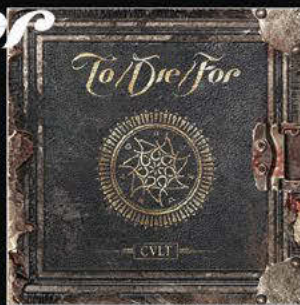
MAS CD0893 / MAS DP0893

To/Die/For

CULT

The 7th album by the melancholic gothic rockers **TO/DIE/FOR** from Kouvola, Finland!

Album also available as limited edition digipak with exclusive bonus track!
Recorded, mixed and mastered by Juho Riihinen in SoundSpiral Audio.
Cover art by Razieli Kainen (Loud W' Clear, Dead Culture, Memnair), a.k.a. Dark-Prince Graphix.



MAS CD0895 / MAS DP0895

SINISTER

DARK MEMORIALS

The 25th anniversary album by one of the most reliable and respected death metal bands in Europe - **SINISTER** from the Netherlands!

Songs produced at the Soundlodge Studio with Jörg Uken
(God Dethroned, Dew-Scented, Deltaration, etc.).

Cover artwork by Alex Tartsus (Afterburner, Simargl, Mist Of Misery).

Also available as limited edition digipak with bonus DVD "Australian Darkness".



MAS CD0908 / MAS DP0908

A Light In The Black

A TRIBUTE TO RONNIE JAMES DIO

A 2-CD tribute to the legendary **RONNIE JAMES DIO**

Featuring
CRYSTAL BALL, METAL INQUISITOR, REBELLION, WIZARD, IRON FATE a.o.

12 bands - 20 tracks!

Cover artwork by Jan Yrlund / Darkgrove.net
(Korpiklaani, Impaled Nazarene, Stratovarius, Sirenia)



MAS CD0875

STORMHAMMER

ECHOES OF A LOST PARADISE

The fifth album of the power metal band **STORMHAMMER** from Munich, Germany!

Recorded at SH Studio in Munich; mix by Maria Lochert and mastering by Jan Vack (Serious Black, Schwarzer Engel), both at Dreamsound Studio in Munich.

Cover artwork by Jan Yrlund / Darkgrove.net (Apocalypse, Manowar, Legion Of The Damned, Korpiklaani, Impaled Nazarene, Stratovarius).

Album also available as limited vinyl LP!



MAS CD0901 / MAS LP0901

BLOODLOST

EVIL ORIGINS

The new and 3rd studio album by the Swiss thrash metallers **BLOODLOST**

Recorded, mixed and mastered by Izakar (Blazing War Machine) and Sébastien Castan at Full Metal Studio in Marseille, France.



MAS CD0985

Hevilan

THE END OF TIME

The debut album of **HEVILAN** from Brazil - power metal meets progressive thrash and melodic hard rock!

Featuring guest drummer **AQUILES PRIESTER (PRIMAL FEAR)**
Guest appearances of Vitor Rodrigues (TORTURE SQUAD, VOODOO PRIEST), Warrel Dane (NEVERMORE, SANCTUARY) and Eduardo Ardanuy (DR. SIN)

Cover artwork by Robson Piccin.



MAS CD0886

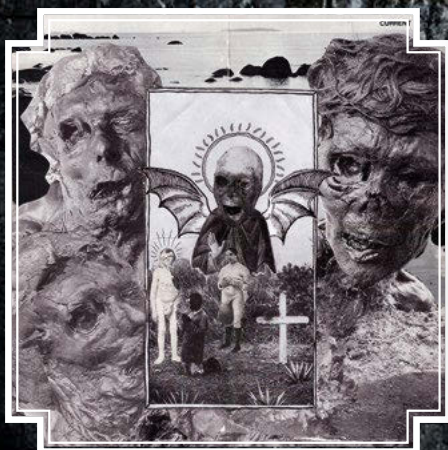
INTO THE CATASTROPHE

TERRORIZER'S MONTHLY DOSE OF FLESH-RIPPING DEATH METAL RETURNS — ONLY THE BEST NEED APPLY

Words: Olivier 'Zoltar' Badin



VORUM



First of, a clarification is in order: although their passports say they're Finnish, **Vorum** are originally from the Åland islands, an autonomous Swedish speaking part of the country. And last year, their vocalist and guitarist Jonatan Johansson has moved to Uppsalla, Sweden where he shortly after joined Degial as their new bass player. Why dwell on all those details? Simply because Vorum's musical roots go deep into each of those two countries' glorious past while paving a path on its own not too far away from their brothers from Invidious, In Solitude's

death metal alter-ego. Actually, Gottfrid and Pelle from In Solitude and Invidious recorded the whole thing and the latter is to be held responsible for its disturbing artwork... Still, what's even more interesting is the fact that since the band's debut EP in 2009, they have gone increasingly darker and more primitive sounding. For its creator, the writing on the wall was already there for everybody to see on their first full-length released two years ago: "We were already on this path towards 'Current Mouth' during the final process of writing 'Poisoned Void'," says Jonatan. "The motivation or call-it-what-you-will is, and always will be on this matter, the treacherous and bottomless pit of madness that is death metal."

Asked why they've come up with 'just' a five-track EP instead of a whole new album, he simply states that it was because "we felt that these songs were an entity together". He doesn't deny Degial's importance though, yet stresses that they should be viewed as two separate entities. "We are of the same blood, and it is the band closest to Vorum, though it has not had any direct effect since we are separate bands who continue what we do and have been doing, however with a very similar vision. It is an evolvement of events linked to swallowing the foul poison of death metal."

While we're at it knee deep in poisonous odour, **Feral** from Skellefteå, 800 kms up north from Stockholm, are pretty good at it too. Except that it's more obvious where this lot's collective head is.

"I'd say it's obvious that we like Entombed, and for good reason," agrees their vocalist David Nilsson, "but we strive to be more than a cover band. We draw inspiration from so many other bands and genres that it would be unfair to give all credit to one source. As we are many songwriters within the band I can only speak for myself, but for my part I would give just as much credit to German thrash metal, I also listened to loads of doom as well as old school rock and heavy metal. You get tired of the comparison, even though it's not unjustified, as I would say there is much else to the music than just that. If I had to say something myself that sets us apart from other death metal bands it would be our use of the back-up vocals as we have quite a lot of them and that we very rarely dub my vocals into something that can't be done live but instead will have the other guys in the band doing back-up."

Still, when they first got together in 2007, they didn't pick up *that* name for no reason.

"That's how we think death metal should be played; angry and dirty. When we started, there were a lot of technical bands out there and I think a lot of charm was lacking and we were always more into the older bands that had been around since long before we ever picked up our instruments. We think this music needed to put back some blood and sweat and not just complicated riffs for the sake of being complicated whether they would do anything to the songs or not. That's not necessarily a bad



thing but it is nothing for us. We'll leave that to the hipsters and keep on bashing out our formula of death metal, whether it is considered in or out."

Nevertheless, they almost received a fatal blow when back from their second European tour with Demonical they learnt the news that their then label Ibex Moon, ran by John McEntee from Incantation, had folded. Next in line was the loss of two of their members and for a moment, things looked quite grim – until last year, when they put out a split EP with Revel in Flesh and now 'Where Dead Dreams Deal', their second full-length and the "result of four years of writing".

"We actually recorded fourteen songs during that session and chose the ones that we thought would fit together most, and they are more arranged to complement each other this time around. It's definitely more aggressive than the previous one before with more twists and turns, some tempo changes and a few odd time signatures but far from getting pretentious. This is honest death metal for people who like death metal."

Even if they're lurking in far more blackish surroundings and also rooted in the late '80s and early '90s yet coming from South-America, Brussels' **Possession** share the same kind of stubborn attitude. Even if as a band they're only three years old, they've respectfully played by the book by releasing first a demo, then a seven inch and now their first proper EP with only few scattered yet high-profiled gigs to promote them.

"We've seen too many bands ruining all their efforts by rushing things in," strikes back their vocalist Mestema. "These days, anybody can do an album! Good things take time and



we'd rather release five more EPs than put out a shitty album." Their music may be qualified as old-school black/death but he refutes that term, "accepting we're old-school would mean there's a new school and I just can't accept that. Metal started out with Black Sabbath and evolved until the early '90s. Some people have decided to drift away from those principles and we have nothing in common with them, that's all." Hence their choice of a cliché moniker ("if some people think so and don't want to check us out, so be it, we don't care") and proto-corpselpaint or lyrical theme for their '1585-1646' EP that tells the life story of a supposedly French witch, as portrayed at her birth by Chris Moyon for the

cover artwork although she finished her life at the stake. The MLP may have been produced by Phorgath from Enthroned but unsurprisingly, Mestema spits on the "clowns that pollute the Belgian scene". He actually thinks that their side-lining has worked in their benefit and based on the quality of this King Diamond-like concept EP ("Ah! Those lyrics tell one story but we're still aeons away from the level of the King, let's be honest...") and since we're ready to bet a can of fresh cider that no-one can pinpoint what your typical Belgian extreme metal is supposed to sound like anyway in the first place, well, we pretty much agree with the man. ☺

"THIS MUSIC NEEDED TO PUT BACK SOME BLOOD AND SWEAT AND NOT JUST COMPLICATED RIFFS"



DAY OF RECKONING

ELECTING TO RE-FORM TO COMMEMORATE THEIR 30TH ANNIVERSARY, THRASH TITANS NUCLEAR ASSAULT WILL BE UNDERTAKING THEIR FINAL TOUR THIS COMING YEAR. BASSIST DAN LILKER TELLS TERRORIZER WHY THEY WON'T BE GOING QUIETLY. OH, AND DID WE MENTION A NEW EP?!

Words: Ross Baker

Dan Lilker is a name all readers of Terrorizer will be familiar with. As a pioneer in the thrash, crossover and grindcore movements, Lilker's vision of extreme music helped pave the way for everyone from Municipal Waste to Pig Destroyer. From his contributions to Anthrax's classic debut record 'Fistful Of Metal' to forming grind powerhouse Brutal Truth, Dan Lilker is a journeyman musician, who continues to create music with friends in his hometown of Rochester, New York, purely for the love of doing so. Having announced his retirement from being a full time musician on October 18th last year (his 50th birthday), Dan is about to be awfully busy for one whose career is winding down.

"It was almost coincidental that it was the 30th anniversary," the bassist recalls. "I decided I didn't want to be in a full-time band that was constantly writing and touring anymore. This will not be a situation where we will go on for another five or six years. Once we have played somewhere on this tour we are done. We're no spring chickens! Glenn in particular has had issues with one of his shoulders. He has a lot of punishing physical shit to do in this band. When you get to our age, your body starts to fall apart. That's okay if you're sat in a lawn chair watching reality TV shows but not when playing this music. We aren't going out there to be lame old men. We'll give this 110 per cent."

Remarkably, Lilker appears completely sincere

when he discusses the end of his life as a touring musician. While artists complaining about endlessly traveling and spending time away from loved ones is nothing new, the lure of cold hard cash often provides too much temptation for many to continue performing way past their creative prime. Dan insists this is of no interest to him.

"This is a celebration of Nuclear Assault, not a cynical marketing ploy. We have to earn money for our families but we don't need the band for that. Those guys who still have it can carry on but the ones who are just half assing it should quit! I won't be out playing Nuclear Assault and Brutal Truth songs with other bands for cash after we are done touring. That wouldn't feel right."

Rather than trot out a lazy, ill-conceived 'Greatest Hits' release to make a quick buck, the group announced in late 2013 they would be putting out a new full length album which would be preceded by their new EP 'Pounder'. Since that announcement, however, there has been a change of plan.


"I know I made a statement about us doing an album but we later decided it will be a series of EPs instead," Dan reveals. "By the time we had material written there was not enough to issue a full length before we started touring. We wanted to release good quality material rather than just shit out forty five minutes of music. John [Connelly, guitar/vocals] and Glenn [Evans, drums] have to fly here to write as they no longer live in Rochester. I don't think people want thirty minutes of new material in the live shows anyway. They want to hear 'Hang The Pope' and all the classics."

Even a mere cursory listen to 'Pounder' will provide a taste of classic thrash with no concern for modern influences. Was this a conscious decision? How important was it to compose new material rather than have the band running through the back catalogue?

"I hadn't written thrash in ages and this was what came out! It was instinctive and natural. I knew it wouldn't have blastbeats or evil chords like my grind and black metal stuff. The next EP will be recorded at Sonic Ranch in Texas. We would have done 'Pounder' there but Glenn was talking to the studio guy and he spaced after Glenn gave him the dates as he had someone else booked. Eric [Burke, guitar] and I have been writing material which we will work on in the fall. 'Third World Genocide' was a mediocre record. It should never have been recorded. I wanted to make up for that. We didn't want that to be the last thing we were remembered for. These EPs are a fitting epitaph to our career. We're going out with a bang!"

The resolutely "old school" approach to songwriting has prevailed on 'Pounder' but Dan notes the band have taken a more diverse lyrical approach this time. Despite retiring from the spotlight, he remains active in his local scene and shows great enthusiasm when it comes to younger bands and the place thrash has within the pantheon of metal.

"Pounder" is a love song to our fans. It's a salute to thrash and the music scene – it's a bit Manowar! We're known for doing social/political stuff so it's a departure for us for sure. There's a bit of humour but some serious stuff too. 'Died In Your Arms' is about a home invasion. John wrote about a father who had to fight off an intruder to protect his family. Thrash metal will always be relevant. Municipal Waste were probably shitting their diapers when we started but they ingested what we were doing with their heart and soul. Bands like this keep this genre alive. There are more young people coming to these shows than we ever had before. I remember people telling me they saw me wearing a Napalm Death shirt in 1988 and that's how they got into the band. That's the great thing about metal; we value our history."

Their last hurrah may be in sight but Lilker acknowledges it's time to move on. "I am really proud of what Nuclear Assault has achieved, we were one of the first bands to introduce socially aware lyrics which we took from hardcore. S.O.D. did it but in a more contrived or deliberate way. Before that, lyrics in metal weren't too important. I think we took things up a notch!" 

'Pounder' is out now on Dry Heave/Sidipus Records
www.Facebook.com/NuclearAssaultOfficial



"WE AREN'T GOING OUT THERE TO BE LAME"



G

PIC: AL PULFORD

OLD MEN. WE'LL GIVE THIS 110 PER CENT"

IN FORT



THE PILL

AS THE FRONTMAN OF RAMMSTEIN, TILL LINDEMANN HAS BROUGHT ARRESTING, FETISH-INSPIRED INDUSTRIAL METAL TO THE STADIUMS. WITH HIS NEW PROJECT, LINDEMANN, GERMANY'S PREMIER EXHIBITIONIST GETS BIZARRE WITH HYPOCRISY'S PETER TÄGTGREN IN TOW.

Words: Ross Baker

Till Lindemann is a larger than life character. He has sold over seventeen million albums with Rammstein, yet this former Olympic swimmer remains a dedicated workaholic who is about to embark on writing a third book of poetry and has a couple of acting projects he is "considering."

Then there is his new project, Lindemann. Not a straight-up solo gig but a collaboration with über producer and Hypocrisy/Pain mastermind Peter Tägtgren. What started over a drinking session several years ago has spawned a collection of twisted dance floor fillers that demonstrate the vocalist's penchant for somewhat warped storytelling.

"We met in Stockholm back in 1998 when I was recording with Rammstein. We started drinking together one night and after twenty Jägermeisters we figured we would try writing something!" laughs Till in his unmistakable deep baritone. "He asked me to do a song with him for his next Pain album but we were both too busy. It wasn't until after Wacken in 2013, when I knew Rammstein was due a two year break that I called Peter to ask him to send over the music he had been working on. The first track he sent became 'Ladyboy' and things progressed really quickly from there."

The Lindemann project made an impression right away, even before any music had been aired, when the first photograph of the duo appeared online. A perverse and slightly macabre shot featuring Till as a groom with Tägtgren as his half woman, half goat bride has garnered polarising feedback from fans. "We did that to forge our own identity and separate Lindemann from Rammstein and Pain," the vocalist acknowledges. "We have a photo for every song on the album which will come with a 28- page booklet. You have the photos, lyrics and artwork which all tie together. We have finished a crazy, fucked up video for the first single 'Praise Abort'. It will be censored, I guarantee it! The label staff will love that. They're jumping and dancing in the office if the songs get censored because it will mean the record will sell more. It's a thousand times worse than the 'Pussy' video!"

As frontman for Rammstein, Till Lindemann is no stranger to causing controversy or pushing the

envelope with his music, videos and live performances. After all, this is a man who had surgery to have a light inserted into his mouth just to get the right effect for a music video and simulated anal sex with his keyboard player – but it's not all about shock tactics, maintains the vocalist.

"It is not about causing controversy; I don't think anyone consciously tries to be provocative unless you're Marilyn Manson. When it comes to lyrics, I read stories, poetry and find things on the internet. People ask me, 'Is there anything you couldn't write about?', and I tell them 'no', because all the crazy stuff is there to be read!"

Clearly, even at 52, Till takes a gleeful pleasure from testing the limits of the censors. While supremely confident in the quality of his material, he has modest expectations of how 'Skills In Pills' will be received and how people will react to hearing a full album of him singing in English.

"I am a real pessimist so I have low expectations," says the vocalist. "I am excited to hear what people's reactions will be. The English translations of Rammstein lyrics you see online are very rough but with this record everyone will understand what I am saying. It's a style of English that guys in Chile and Russia can understand and I wanted Peter to know what the songs were about. To have sung in German would have made us sound too much like Rammstein anyway. It is not a joke band but there is a lot of fucked-up black humour involved. I hope people will see the irony but I am prepared for the backlash it may cause!"

Hidden amongst the wacky imagery and sexually charged lyrics, Till has sought to discuss topics which many popular artists would steer well clear of. Till admits it is important to challenge what society dictates as "normal" or "attractive" but has little care for political correctness. A great example of this is the song 'Fat' about the love of, ahem, larger women.

"Why do you have to say 'larger women' all the time? Just say fat girls! There is nothing wrong with that. I was watching a documentary about these so called 'feeders'. Tiny little guys get off on caring for

these huge women who are so big they cannot get out of bed. They get off on feeding, washing them and brushing their hair. For me, it is fascinating to read about people and their extreme fetishes. People with a fetish see life completely differently. I was inspired in the same way when I wrote the song 'Mein Teil' with Rammstein. These extreme subjects truly fascinate me. I mean, it's crazy how people can make such a drama out of the way people dress when you can read the paper and hear about a cannibal who cooked and ate another man's penis! It's so fucking weird how people get so excited about trivial matters like what people look like when there are guys out there doing crazy shit like that!"

While Herr Lindemann clearly had a ball making this record, he is cautious when it comes to the idea of touring, particularly when the Teutonic juggernaut he found fame with is about to return to action. "I will return to Rammstein in September when we start pre-production for the next record! The album will take two years so we will see if Lindemann can tour at that time. It has been great for me to step into costume for a while but I am looking forward to returning to my Rammstein family." ☺

'Skills In Pills' is out now on Warner Music
www.Facebook.com/Lindemann



"I DON'T THINK ANYONE CONSCIOUSLY TRIES TO BE PROVOCATIVE, UNLESS YOU'RE MARILYN MANSON"

"THE WORLD IS FUCKED IN SO MANY WAYS,
HUMANS HAVE DESTROYED EVERYTHING"

THY ART IS MURDER

THE PUNISHMENT DUE

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME COMING, BUT FAR FROM HAVING WRITER'S BLOCK, **THY ART IS MURDER** HAVE JUST BEEN TOO BUSY TOURING TO WRITE A NEW RECORD. WITH 'HOLY WAR', THE WAIT HAS BEEN WORTH IT.

TERRORIZER TALKS TO FRONTMAN CJ McMAHON

Words: Emily Bielby

"It's extremely controversial and it's us speaking about real things; it focuses on what's wrong and what's fucked with the world, in regards to religion, politics, the environment, animal welfare and the way that we're killing the earth. There's some deep shit in there, now we've all grown up a bit and matured a more we decided to tell the world what we think, we're just saying what everyone else is thinking."

When it comes to telling the world about the statement of intent behind Thy Art Is Murder's new opus 'Holy War', frontman CJ McMahon certainly pulls no punches.

He continues: "It's just the way the world is, environmental problems, social problems, religious problems, government problems; it's just all these things and these things need to be spoken about. The world is fucked in so many ways, humans have destroyed everything. I'm really into animal welfare and especially the mistreatment of the ocean and the animals that live in the ocean. In the next ten to fifteen years we're not going

to have fucking seafood!"

The follow up to 2012's breakthrough 'Hate' sees the Sydney deathcore crew up their own ante with quality and while there has been, in this day and age, something of a considerable gap in between releases, it's nothing to do with writer's block, more about being too busy.

"Our last record 'Hate' took off and blew us up and the world just wanted to see us play, so we spent the last three to four years touring our asses off around the world, we didn't have time to write or record a new record!"


He adds: "There's one thing that I hate and that's bands releasing too many albums. We don't want to be a band that have three fucking albums out in the space of three years, it's flooding the market and people get bored of that pretty quick."

Proudly admitting, "this is our strongest record to date," CJ explains more about the record: "I pushed myself to be more audio-friendly; I wanted people to be able to hear the lyrics rather than just this deep powerful

vocalist with words getting lost and people having to guess what we're singing about. It's far more professional too. Our producer Will Putney is one of our best friends and he wanted to make this record one of the best he's ever done."

The album also features a guest appearance from one of Australia's other big exports in modern metal, namely Winston McCall from Parkway Drive.

"He's an idol of mine," says CJ. "I love his band, they're one of my favourite bands and favourite people, not just as a vocalist but as a man. He's good with his fans, he has a great message and he tries to change people's lives and does a lot of charity work. I really wanted him on this record."

About to hit America on the summer Mayhem tour before heading over to the UK and Europe, it seems relentless touring is the one constant that won't change with the game plan. We'll see you in the pit... 

'Holy War' is out now on Nuclear Blast
www.Facebook.com/ThyArtIsMurder

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SKINLESS, NEW YORK'S PREMIER DEATH METALLERS, ARE BACK WITH THEIR NEW STUDIO ALBUM 'ONLY THE RUTHLESS REMAIN'. FRONTMAN SHERWOOD WEBBER TELLS US WHY IT FEELS BLOODY GOOD TO BE BACK.

Words : Kevin Stewart-Panko

The more things change, the more they stay the same," a much smarter man than us once said. That intellectually superior dude was 19th Century journalist, author and social critic Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr who reportedly first uttered that famous quote, though he originally uttered it in French ("Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose"). "No band stays broken up forever," a much less smarter man than Karr (full disclosure: yours truly) has been saying for a lot less time. And even though we've yet to see the return of Naked City or Minor Threat, to name but two sadly missed outfits, that this magazine's pages has trumped up dozens of reunions and the mainstream has hosted multiple of The Who's 'final tours' and can't get rid of Limp Bizkit demonstrates that, despite the music industry's description as a soul-and-money sucking cesspit, the allure of everything from expression of creative energy and seeing the world from the confines of a van to backstage cheese plates and free beer gets in people's blood. With that said, Terror-readers, please welcome back to active duty and full force fighting form Albany,

New York's finest purveyors of brutal death metal, Skinless.

But first, let's slam the dune buggy riding the sands of time into a quick reverse. Originally coming together under the moniker Gorebag in the very early '90s, Skinless took greater shape after guitarist Noah Carpenter excised the trio of dudes with whom he originally formed the band and drafted in drummer Bob Beaulac, bassist Joe Keyser and vocalist/diminutive ball of energy, Sherwood Webber. Considered the band's classic line-up, the quartet went on to ink a deal with Relapse, record three albums (though during a year-long absence, Beaulac was replaced by John Longstreth for 2003's 'From Sacrifice To Survival') and tour relentlessly. Cracks in the facade started showing around the mid-aughts when Webber walked from the band and Joe's brother Jason was drafted in for 2006's 'Trample The Weak, Hurdle The Dead'.

"I initially left just because we had been doing it for so long," recalls the frontman. "After 'From Sacrifice To Survival' came out, I had a change in focus in life. Not that I had any career goals, but I

just wanted a big change. So, I packed up the dog and truck and moved to Denver [2000 miles away, where he still resides] and away I went to snowboard and find a life. We did have a line-up change and it wasn't the same without Bob when we were out on tour. We did a European tour, I caught some crazy European strain of chicken pox and came home sick as shit without a whole lot of money. That was some kind of perspective changer and I felt like it was time to try something else. It was more what was going on with me. They put out 'Trample The Weak, Hurdle The Dead' with Jason on vocals and did a great amount of touring, but I don't exactly know the circumstances about why things fell apart."

Regardless of why, things did indeed fall apart after the 'Trample The Weak...' cycle in 2011. And while there may have been silence in the Skinless camp, the band's members weren't keeping quiet as wings were spread throughout the metal scene: Sherwood with Enemy Reign; Jason Keyser now fronts Origin; Joe played in stoner/doom dudes Gunther Weezel; Noah started a thrash band called Armor Column (from which Skinless' newest member,

"ONCE WE PLAYED SHOWS WITH THE 'CLASSIC LINE-UP', IT FELT RIGHT AND FELT NATURAL TO DO A RECORD"

BACK TO LIFE

guitarist Dave Matthews, was drafted); and Beaulac was rocking the kit for area old-schoolers, Disciples Of Berkowitz. Then, one day, sometime between Enemy Reign rehearsals, snowboarding sessions and dog walking strolls, Webber got a call.

"Actually, I don't exactly remember, if Noah called me or I called him," laughs Sherwood, "but someone said 'Hey, want to play a couple shows?' And it was like, 'Why not?' I'd been out of the band for seven years or so. I didn't leave on any type of bad terms, so it just seemed like a good time to have some fun and that led to having fun making a record. Once we played shows with the 'classic line-up', it felt right and felt natural to do a record. It's funny that, when pressure drops off, how the fun takes over and everything is good. And here we are."

Where we are is the eve of Skinless' fifth full-length, 'Only The Ruthless Remain' which continues the maturation and development the band has demonstrated throughout its tenure. Don't believe it? Recall early gore-obsessed songs/titles like 'Cuntaminated', 'Fetus Goulash' and 'Pool Of Stool' draped behind the crude and typical black-and-white album cover art of the first two albums compared to the more nuanced content comprising 'From Sacrifice...' and focus of the new record. In a

way, Skinless are fortunate that discerning fans took to their musical angle (in which the old-school vibe gets filtered through vicious guitars, temperamental tempo changes, brief technical flashes and attention to song writing flow) and live energy and patiently grew up with them instead of dismissing the band as gore-obsessed curiosity or pornogrind joke.

"They sent me files," Sherwood says, explaining the difference in 'Only The Ruthless...'s construction process, "but I would go back and visit every two or three months and show them what I'd done. We just collectively discussed the songs. The majority of the writing happened in New York, but we'd put together and bounce ideas back and forth and it actually worked out in a great way. Number one, they didn't get sick of me! Number two, it was really exciting. When a file would come, it was like, 'Oh wow, this is going to be a new Skinless song!' It kept things super-fresh and kept me looking forward to getting the next file. Those guys worked really, really hard in the writing process and the addition of Dave added a new dimension too. They had a really strong work ethic going throughout and I was really stoked with everything they sent along the way, but Dave has such an incredible work ethic and I think it kept everybody up. He just keeps going and it really, really motivated us, plus he had great ideas. In a way, Dave really pushed us over the edge

in the song writing and motivation departments."

A new member (meaning Skinless will be a two-guitar force for the first time ever), a new perspective, more realistic expectations and a better understanding of what the band means to its members is helping to power the engine these days. "Older, yet wiser" may be another well-worn quip, but it sums up Skinless going forward.

"Everybody has more responsibility, kids, jobs and all that, but it feels like it did in 1999/2000 when we were becoming an effective band, doing some touring and were really excited about what we were doing. Fortunately, we did so much road work back then that the demand is still there for us today. We feel privileged to be able to do this music for ourselves, primarily, but it's also great to go back out and see people you haven't seen in ten years. There are all sorts of different motivators for us, but it's an ideal situation for us as a band to simply be excited about it. I think it's a great time for us to be doing what we're doing again because the scene is strong and I know the response to this album is going to be great from people into brutal death metal!" ☺

'Only The Ruthless Remain' is out now on Relapse
www.Facebook.com/Skinless

World Coming Down

OVER FIVE YEARS AGO WEST COAST GOTHIC-TINGED DOOM MERCHANTS DOMMIN WERE HUSTLING AS CONTENDERS TO BECOME THE NEXT TYPE O NEGATIVE/DANZIG-INSPIRED DARK ROCKERS. THEN THINGS WENT OFF TARGET. BUT PERSEVERANCE, SELF-BELIEF AND A LOYAL FANBASE HAVE SHOWN KRISTOFER DOMMIN THAT HIS CHOSEN PATH WAS THE RIGHT ONE. AND NEW ALBUM 'RISE' IS TESTAMENT TO THIS

Words: James Weaver

When Dommin released their Roadrunner debut 'Love Is Gone', life was pretty peachy for the West Coast crew, but just a matter of months after its release, things started to go awry. For frontman Kristofer Dommin, the past five years have been the most difficult years of his life.

"All of a sudden I had all these real life situations happening to me, from losing my fiancé, losing my dad, to losing my record deal," he says. "There was a lot of self-doubt, I thought maybe this isn't the right path I should be on."

Legal disputes and the aforementioned personal issues have meant Dommin have effectively been in the wilderness for the past five years, however, slowly and surely Kristofer started to get the wheels moving once again.

His biggest fear: were the fans still there? In anticipation for the release of 'Rise', Dommin joined the ever-increasingly popular Pledge campaigns for the new record and much to his astonishment, the band smashed their target goal – demonstrating that the fans never left the band's side.

"We actually ran a Pledge campaign that was quite successful," he beams. "We reached our Pledge goal within 24 hours and we got eleven times more than the Pledge goal!"

And through the worst of the troubles he has faced over the past five years, Kris strongly believes that his love for music will never fade. "When all of this stuff happened I just wanted to be a fan again. I realised that stuff really didn't matter and I rediscovered where I came from. I'm just a guy who loves the shit out of music, I'm

the fan of so many bands, I love writing songs, I love playing the guitar, and I love singing. That's the core of it, this is what I want to do."

With such great anticipation for 'Rise', fans will be curious as to how the band has developed in the five years since their debut, 'Love Is Gone', and he reveals that 'Rise' marks a change in direction for the band and a slight anxiety to how people will react as a result. "There is always that anxiety. These songs talk about picking yourself up, rising and keep going and the new record is different to our last. People will be hard pressed to call it a goth record," he says. "But the reaction has been the complete opposite, people love it!"

Despite five turbulent years where the band's future was very much in doubt, Kristofer is confident that the new record can re-ignite the flames of his future as a musician. "When the dust started to settle and we started to get our bearings, I asked myself big life questions. I really came to the conclusion that yeah, a lot of it is bullshit but I don't care!" Kris exclaims. "It doesn't really matter to me, it doesn't really change the way I feel about things or who I am. We're going to paddle our little boat through a sea of bullshit!" ☺

'Rise' is out now on DNRRecords
www.Dommin.com

"All of a sudden I had all these real life situations happening to me, from losing my fiancé, losing my dad, to losing my record deal"



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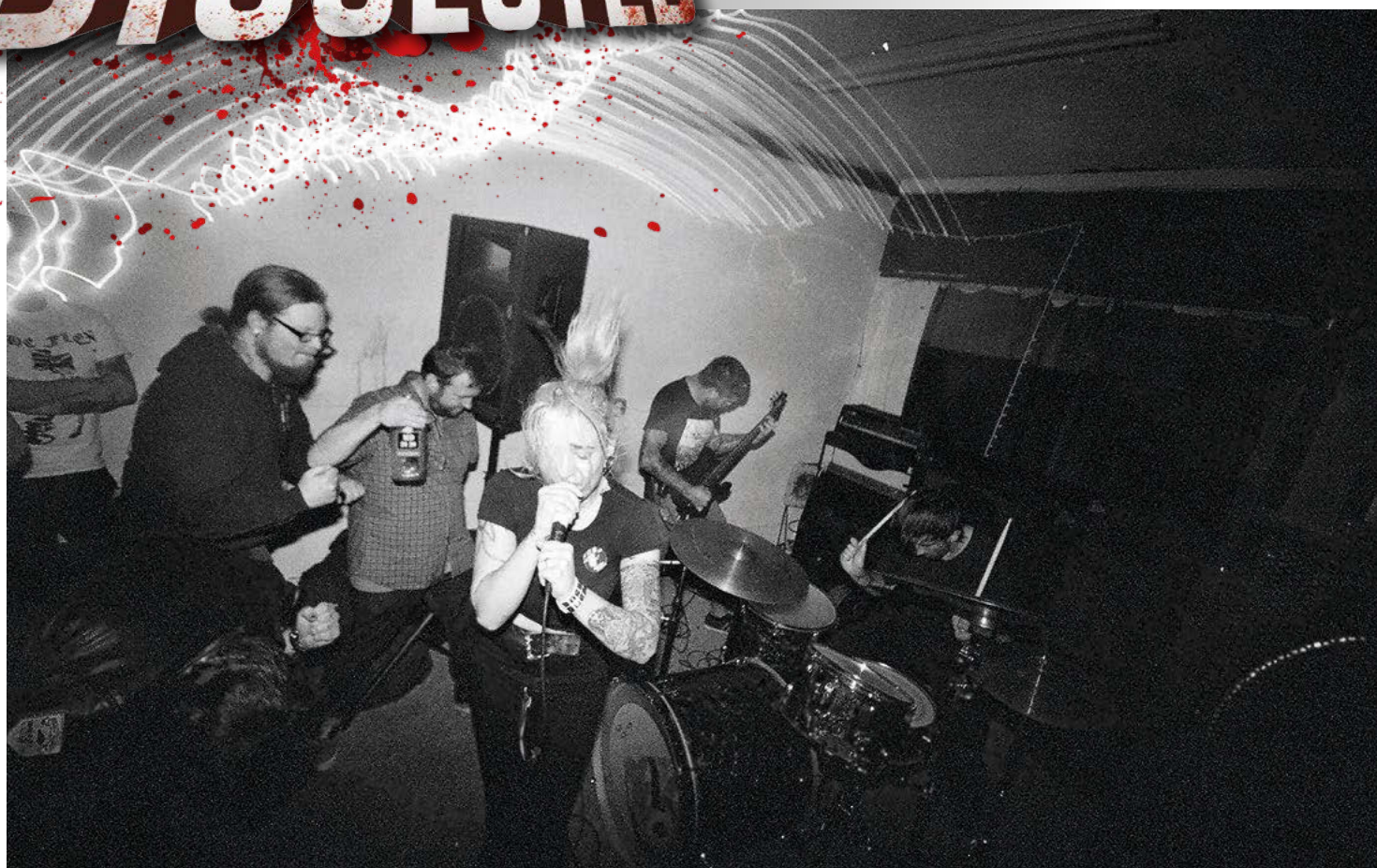
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ALBUM OF THE MONTH GRINDCORE 2.0



CLOUD RAT

'Qliphoth'

HALO OF FLIES

Grindcore is not known for its emotional complexity or depth. Three decades after its inception, grind is still not able to express much besides blind rage or disgust (or, after you've listened to the 734th identical 'extreme' goregrind band, boredom).

Cloud Rat are different. While their previous albums and splits have shown them to be more nuanced than your run-of-the-mill grind band, third full-length 'Qliphoth' reveals more strings to Cloud Rat's bow, with even more subtle light and shade than before, as reflected in the Art Nouveau-like cover art. Like Converge or Alcest at their best, there is a sense of profundity here. The melancholy that pervades 'Qliphoth' is not adolescent moping, but the deep sadness of the realisation that there could be another, better world, and this isn't it. The Alcest comparison isn't as odd as it seems, as Cloud Rat have now become a four-piece with the addition of Brandon Hill's electronics. His understated contribution to the album makes all the difference, combining with Rorik Brooks' innovative guitar work to create foggy patches of noise that can seem more My Bloody Valentine than Repulsion.

Don't get it twisted though; Cloud Rat can still

grind with the best of 'em. Agoraphobic Nosebleed's J Randall, whose label Grindcore Karaoke released Cloud Rat's 'ST L/P', claims that drummer Adrian Manges is responsible for the fastest blastbeat he's ever heard. There are straight-up grind riffs in the mould of Terrorizer or Napalm Death here, as well as the ambient noise stuff; the surprise is how, rather than simply being juxtaposed, the quiet and the loud are seamlessly woven together. Unlike a lot of their contemporaries, Cloud Rat don't just aim for non-stop bludgeoning — which is just as well, because when the band go for it, they really go for it. A lot of grind or hardcore vocalists sound like they're acting at being angry because it's required for the genre. Cloud Rat's Madison Marshall sounds genuinely furious, and not because something didn't go her way, but because nothing ever went anyone's way. This is the fury tinged with sadness that rages against patriarchy,



capitalism, racism, ecocide and everything else that makes the world so shitty. The band's enigmatic lyrics show that they're not simply preaching to the converted either, glibly telling you that police violence is A Bad Thing; these songs require you to think.

While there's a surprising amount of variation here — 'Bolt Gun' features a riff most metalcore bands would kill for, while 'The Killing Horizon' sounds like an alternate-universe Brian Eno — Cloud Rat remain at heart a punk/grind band, and a very good one. It's just that they're far more than that too. Building on the potential of their previous releases, 'Qliphoth' throws down the gauntlet to ask whether, after black metal and death metal have seen their boundaries shift dramatically over the last ten years, it's now grindcore's turn.

[9] ED CHAPMAN



BETWEEN THE BURIED & ME

'Coma Ecliptic'

METAL BLADE

When most of your albums trouble the hour mark and span several genres, it can't be easy to come up with something new. Sure, Between The Buried And Me have yet to make an excursion into black metal or neo folk, but they have progressive metalcore with recurring raspy vocals pretty much covered. Their seventh studio album is a high concept rock opera about a coma patient travelling through multiple dimensions, all of which sound like the inside of the BTBAM recording bunker. There are no shocking left turns or



departures here, which makes it all the more impressive that 'Coma Ecliptic' has a solid claim as a career best effort. Settled into their genre of one, the North Carolinians have assumed complete mastery of it; 'Famine Wolf' powering through their bag of tricks, augmenting it with Tommy Rogers's best Mike Pattoning since 'The Great Misdirect's' dizzying 'A Feed From Cloud Mountain'. 'King Redeem – Queen Serene' has, at the risk of hyperbole, the Platonic ideal of a chorus, made extra special by the way the sometimes

forced death metal vocals find their most thrilling expression yet here as they bridge back into it. Sticking to the concept, this is the coma dimension you'll want to stop plane shifting and wake up in, though 'The Ectopic Stroll' outdoes it for outrageous charisma and 'Rapid Calm' offers a transcendent closing guitar solo for your consideration. Even if the stylistic shifts have ceded the element of surprise, song writing of this standard never will.

[8.5] BENJ GOLANSKI

A BIT ON THE SIDE

VOCALIST TOMMY GILES ROGERS ON THE BAND'S SIDE-PROJECTS

"Dan and I do a lot of different projects, but when BTBAM are writing, we're never working on anything else. It's always extremely focused. When we have free time, it's something interesting to do. And it can only be a good thing for the band – it's getting the name out more, and the whole process helps you to develop your craft. We all have different streaks, and spend a lot of time analysing our music, getting into it. But all of us enjoy *all* of our music – if one of us doesn't like something, it won't go through, and it's always been that way. That's why our records flow so well."

ABRAHMA

'Reflections In The Bowels Of A Bird'

SMALL STONE

The old adage "too many cooks spoil the broth" rings true with this latest offering from Paris natives, Abrahma. Displaying mighty psychedelic chops at what feels like too late in the album, there are certainly a myriad of influences going on here, from Alice In Chains to co-patriots Gojira. Most of the tracks lack cohesion considering their length, some feeling as though they are just too long, others falling flat before hitting the 'eargasm' mark so beloved of prog-rock. That being said, this album offers a dense, rewarding and cerebral hit with repeated plays – 'Omens Pt 1 -3' being the stand out track, offering a more mature approach to psyched out riffage than their previous work.

[6] IAN WILLIAMS

AUGUST BURNS RED

'Found In Far Away Places'

FEARLESS



Pennsylvania prog-core five-piece August Burns Red offer up their most accomplished album to date, 'Found In Far Away Places'. Following on from 'Rescue & Restore' (2013), their sixth original opus finds the band reaching levels of creativity that others only dream of. All their trademark characteristics are here, like those brutal double-kick breakdowns, mega melodic riffs, and of course, genre-defying detours through unexpected musical territories. 'The Wake' grapples with the issue of humans apathetically destroying the earth, while the ultra uplifting 'Ghosts' features A Day To Remember's Jeremy McKinnon on guest vocals, and will imprint its chorus in your mind and a smile on your face.

[7.5] RAY HOLROYD

COFFINS

'Perpetual Penance'

HORROR PAIN GORE DEATH



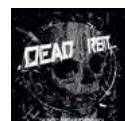
A double CD compilation of rare vinyl, live shows and splits, 'Perpetual Penance' is a testament to Coffins' profuseness in production of Autopsy inspired, leering death/sludge. The endless thunder that these guys produce could be construed as repetitive on their part and indeed, an avid fan would have heard these tracks across a plethora of releases over the years – however, the sheer wall of grot that greets the listener makes it a worthwhile spin. The openers 'Hellbringer' and 'No Saviour' are favourites as they showcase Coffins at their best; crumbling landscapes of bass-induced fear with the visceral crack of the six string whip. An essential purchase if you've missed any releases post 2009.

[8] IAN WILLIAMS

DEAD ORBIT

'The Encyclopedia Mechronomica'

SELF-RELEASE



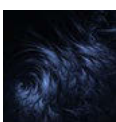
Coining the term "blackened hobo grind" to describe themselves doesn't do Dead Orbit justice. What you get here is seven tracks of largely mid-paced blackened death laden with dystopian samples à la Zyklon, starting strongly with a voice over contributed by Dark Fortress man Florian Maier and a minimal cold keyboard passage. Sadly they have picked up none of his talent for arrangements. The sporadic use of electronics help inject atmosphere into the songs but the drums sound far too artificial and guitars lack the necessary punch required to feel their post-apocalyptic hymns of hate. Dead Orbit shouldn't be jettisoned but without addressing these issues, they drift dangerously close to the vortex of the forgettable.

[4] ROSS BAKER

ABYSSAL

'Antikatastaseis'

PROFOUND LORE



Abyssal, one of the UK's most, if not the most, enigmatic acts, returns with their third full-length, 'Antikatastaseis'. We will not hazard an attempt to translate the title into proper King's English, but we grasp the "Anti-" aspect and how this openly oppositional concept remains central to Abyssal's presentation and sound. Mysterious, but above all, magical, 'Anti...' shows Abyssal – completely unfettered – further exploring the impenetrable void's interstitial spaces. The abstract beauty within their murky chaotic dissonance, if you can believe beauty exists in such a suffocating style, is Abyssal's sinister, yet brightly shimmering melodicism. Without hyperbole, 'Anti...' is an artistic triumph by a dynamic act that has elevated their dark art to a dazzling new level.

[9] JOHN MINCEMOYER

AUTHOR & PUNISHER

'Melk En Honing'

HOUSECORE



The solitary rider atop Author And Punisher's industrial horse of doom is Tristan Shone. His approach to music is an art unto itself; not content with just playing instruments, he feels the need to build them, crafting drone machines, rhythm contraptions, dub machines and vocal devices. These devices need physical interaction, and their cumbersome nature lends the doom/industrial sounds produced a true weight and heaviness. Shone builds a far more song orientated/structured album with 'Melk And Honing' than on his three previous records. A&P are still pushing their art and developing the signature earth-moving sounds that make them a truly unique artist in a world of clones.

[8] ALEX BONIWELL

DARKTRIBE

'The Modern Age'

SCARLETT



Album deux from the chameleonic Frenchmen sees them tighten the screws with the aid of Jacob Hensen, a producer well-versed in their brand of eurometal pomp. Like last time around, Darktribe do well when equipped with some bittersweet refrains, often tapping into the spirit of Nightwish's fairytale charm. There are spring-loaded, sub-industrial grooves too, before 'No Train To Earth' then does something of a 180, an arena-filler with vocals and guitars firmly stuck on the stratospheric setting. If the album was a banquet, it would be a slice from the cheeseboard. The thrashy-riff-twinkly-keyboard idea is copy-pasted ad nauseam, but the record's more varied moments will keep you guessing. Some might even just keep you listening..

[6] ANDY MCDONALD

DEATH ALLEY

'Black Magick Boogieland'

TEE PEE



When a hotly-tipped new band comes along playing what it describes as "old-school rawk," first you imagine which proto-metal/hard rock band or bands it's ripping off, and then you trepidatiously wonder just how good it'll actually be, just how it will stick out among all the other proto-metal revivalists bands out there. Led by former The Devil's Blood guitarist Oeds Beydals, Death Alley is an energetic blend of Grand Funk, the MC5 and Cactus, more focused on the American-influenced boogie side of early-'70s heaviness rather than British blues-and-bloom, and the result is a debut that arrives with a lot more swagger than expected, 'Dead Man's Bones' and space rock opus "Supernatural Predator" leading the charge.

[5] ADRIEN BEGRAND

SELECTED AND DISSECTED

"FULL OF MOURNFUL VIOLINS, GHOSTLY VOCALS AND CRAZED ORGANS"



CRADLE OF FILTH 'Hammer Of The Witches'

NUCLEAR BLAST

The cover art for 'Hammer Of The Witches' was created by Latvian artist Arthur Berzinsh, whose depiction of the female form is described by Dani Filth as "unashamedly displayed in its classical rendition of beauty and horror." They've found a match made in Hell, then. Throughout their 24-year career, Cradle Of Filth have embraced all things gothic, a thematic style focusing on the darker side of love and humanity. It's when you learn that some of Berzinsh's works depict cherubs making bubbles from a lady's farts and Pikachu eating his own kidneys that it really clicks, though – the band have also never been afraid to be subversive to the daft end of the spectrum, blackening Cliff Richard and Heaven 17 covers along the way.

Ironically enough, there's little of that going on here, nor has there been for the last few records. As though having grown out of a rebellious teenage phase, the band



of today are focused and fiery. 'Right Wing Of The Garden Triptych' is classic Filth, full of mournful violins, ghostly vocals and crazed organs. The metal has also been reinforced, with a new line-up – including two axemen – bringing back a twin-guitar sound that creates some ample earworms.

A revolving door personnel might bring up difficulties in maintaining loyalty, the controversy may have long since faded and their popularity possibly waned – they've picked up a few detractors along the way – but a solid entry proves that, whatever happens, the Cradle will rock.

[7] ANDY McDONALD

THE ART OF WITCHCRAFT

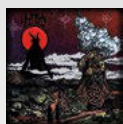
DANI FILTH ON THE INFLUENCE OF WITCHCRAFT/PAGANISM...

"We started writing about this time last year, because it's this period of the year where there's a re-emergence of nature which is what Paganism is well-versed in. So that natural order, and also the music, inspired and conspired to give us these thoughts. 'Hammer Of The Witches' was originally a working title that obviously

I thought was great; I live in the Witch County [Sussex] and I'm always surrounded by these things, people I know are into witchcraft and what have you. But the whole album isn't necessarily about that, although the cover artwork would lead you to believe so because it's just so beautifully done, it looks like this lavish walkthrough of persecution and revenge."

DEMON LUNG 'A Dracula'

CANDLELIGHT



Inspired by cult horror flick 'Alucarda', this second album from Las Vegas doomsters Demon Lung is brimming with ominous tar-stained riffs and the melancholy yet powerful vocals of Shanda Fredrick. Billy Anderson does a typically bang up job on the production, allowing each instrument enough presence in the mix without overshadowing the rest. Certainly, obscure stories of satanic possession and forbidden love are typical of the genre but Demon Lung successfully explore this territory without ever becoming schlocky or lapsing into hokum. 'Mark Of Jubilee' highlights Fredrick's ability to switch from hushed tones to soaring melodies that are both portentous and threatening, and her smoky voice and poignant delivery make for an affecting oratory experience.

[7] ROSS BAKER

EVIL BRAIN TASTE 'Dead Dead Bad'

SELF-RELEASE

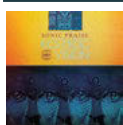


Seemingly picking up the blood-encrusted baton thrown down by Send More Paramedics, Evil Brain Taste specialise in creepy-sounding zombie-fixated thrash (with hints of Floridian death) metal. Punky opener 'Zombies Ate My Brains' is unapologetically old school, and lays the table for the scabrous smorgasbord to follow, fusing blast beats with immediately catchy riffing, not to mention more preposterous zombie references than you can shake a ball-pein hammer at. 'Those Whose Bodies Are Subject To Decay' brings a lumbering Voivod-esque discordance to proceedings, and 'Rotting Fox' the atmosphere of strident black metal, but it's all undeniably silly and nasty and will crack open your cranium and chow down on your brain stem as soon as look at you.

[7] IAN GLASPER

ECSTATIC VISION 'Sonic Praise'

RELAPSE



Channeling the cosmic space psychedelia of Hawkwind et al, Ecstatic Vision's debut 'Sonic Praise' is an intoxicating fusion of seductive rhythms, hypnotic beats and transcendental guitar playing, summoned through a mystical lens of Eastern spirituality. From opening track 'Journey', the band's primal and swaggering psych proves a heady force, and comes delivered with a complete immersion in the vibe of their sonic predecessors, with the fuzzed-out bass and distorted vocals emanating straight from the '70s. The tribal, kaleidoscopic atmosphere of following twelve-minuter 'Astral Plane' cements Ecstatic Vision's reprieve as a genuine modern manifestation of this classic style, and as 'Sonic Praise' plays on, it's impossible not to feel time and space becoming a little frayed around the edges.

[7] RICH TAYLOR

THE EXPLODING EYES 'ORCHESTRA'

'I'



Yes, this is and sounds like a Jess And The Ancient Ones spin-off. Not only because it features five of its seven members – including vocalist Jess – but also because main songwriter Thomas Corpse is once again at the helm here. Essentially, 'I' is melodic '70s rock that feels like another JATAO album, yet more concise and at the same time looser feeling, while their occult background has been toned down a notch, despite the use of the 1962 recording of actor Roddy McDowall reading HP Lovecraft's 'The Hound' for the song 'Black Hound'. But without that dark cloud hanging above their head and only 'Two-Zero 13' being throat-grabbing, elements of danger and urgency are sadly missing here.

[5] OLIVIER 'ZOLTAR' BADIN

DEATHHAMMER 'Evil Power'

HELLS HEADBANGERS

Hailing from the bowels of Norway, Deathhammer have been impressing metal fans since 2006 with their putrid storm of filthy thrash. The latest assault the duo have delivered to the ears of the masses is entitled 'Evil Power', an eight-track tornado full of vicious riffs and raw energy. The band have even impressed Darkthrone's Fenriz; so much so that they appeared at Live Evil back in 2013, a festival which prides itself on featuring his 'Band Of The Week' choices. One listen through and you can see why. The relentless guitar work is interspersed with Sergeant Salsten's feral vocals and drumming that never takes its foot off the gas, to create a speed metal powerbomb

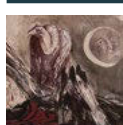


that doesn't need to be complex to crush all in its path. 'Evil Power' may be generic, but Deathhammer have this formula down and you know what they say: if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

[8] BETH AVISON

FALSE 'Untitled'

GILEAD



With Deafheaven and Liturgy revered as much as they are revered, now is the time for a USBM band like False to garner acclaim without any controversy or hype. Since their 2012 split with Barghest, the mysterious Minnesota act have put their art ahead of all trivialities – and on their full-length debut 'Untitled', their artistic vision is clearly defined. False shun ebullience and awkward experimentation, and instead lay siege to the Norwegian second wave while shaping themselves on Weakling's masterwork 'Dead As Dreams'. So, as they blast towards a redemptive light that never manifests, it becomes apparent that while False do hold certain traditions tight, they're also intent on twisting tropes into creative new forms.

[8] DEAN BROWN

FERAL 'Where Dead Dreams Dwell'

CYCLONE EMPIRE



Feral's 'Dragged To The Altar' debut was praised for its seamless combination of Swedish death metal and Sky Valley desert rock. On album number two, the Kyuss records were stored away as the lads from Skellefteå have spent more time exploring their heritage. You know the culprits: Entombed, Dismember, Grave... throw in some Revolting, Death Breath and a little Furbowl and it's obvious that Feral should be wrapped in yellow and blue doing what they do. There is a metric shit-ton of NWOSDM coming from all corners of the globe these days, but there's still something special about motherlanders doing it and doing it well, complete with the appropriate buzzsaw guitars, the punky drums, bleak melodies and thick, banging (almost danceable) grooves.

[8] KEVIN STEWART-PANKO



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HIGH ON FIRE 'Luminiferous'

CENTURY MEDIA

When the knighthoods for services for heavy metal are inevitably handed out, Matt Pike is going to be collecting his award riding on a massive dragon with a Les Paul in one hand and a huge axe in the other. For ever since the demise of Sleep, the erstwhile guitarist has made it his life's work to make the most consistently arse-kicking metal this side of a steel plant forging Doc Martins. Following like clockwork from 2012's 'De Vermis Mysteriis', this year's offering kicks off in typical brash fashion with 'The Black Plot' with everything we've come to expect from HOF: the double bass beats à la Motörhead, the gnarly guitar riffs wielded like a chainsaw next to completely over the top solos. And so it continues like the bastard son of the aforementioned Motörhead and thrash wielded together. In fact, when the slower 'The Falconist' pops round, it does seem a bit of a damp squib in the context of the explosive riffing on display elsewhere – especially on finale 'The



Lethal Chamber', which shows that he's never far from his slow stoner doom roots no matter where his current allegiances lie. The production does seem to reflect his roots in the bowels of the earth as it's their thickest yet; a sludgy continent-shattering shudder. Career highlight 'Snakes For The Divine' may be more agile and have the incomparably titled 'Bastard Samurai', but in terms of anger and sheer basic power 'Luminiferous' is the most muscular the trio have ever unleashed.

[9] STEVE JONES

MASTER OF FISTS

DRUMMER DES KENSEL ON MATT PIKE'S IMPROVING HEALTH

"I am not sure he has a routine right now but he uses a bunch of skin products! People talk about how much healthier he looks since he quit drinking and lost weight but he used to be really into working out. He actually turned me onto

Muay Thai fifteen years ago. He moved up to the mountains for a couple of years, where he lived on a property powered by solar power and well water. There was a boxing gym up there we used to use. Matt was one tough dude!"

GALLEY BEGGAR 'Silence And Tears'

RISE ABOVE



The acid-folk sound which evolved and flourished in the 1960s and '70s still boasts cultish appreciation and bands who honour the flame.

It's been a full decade since Circulus enjoyed an unlikely moment in the sun after clandestine folkie Lee Dorrian signed them to Rise Above, and now London sextet Galley Beggar are following their path. 'Silence And Tears', their third album, plays it straighter than Circulus: Fairport-style electric folk with easy-on-the-ear harmonising, Jimmy Page-ish blues noodling and more phasing effects than are strictly necessary. Opening with two trad. arr. ballads, 'Geordie' and 'Jack Orion', Galley Beggar's own material occasionally verges on the saccharine, but peaks, psychedelically speaking, with the nine-minute powerhouse 'Pay My Body Home'.

[6.5] NOEL GARDNER

GOATLORD 'Demo 87/Reh 88'

NUCLEAR WAR NOW!



Nuclear War Now! has lovingly reissued Goatlord's demo from 1987, along with rehearsal footage from 1988. The first four

tracks make up the demo material, with satisfyingly raw, sloppy extreme metal in the vein of Hellhammer or early Celtic Frost. After 'Sacrifice' (the demo version), there is, naturally, a sharp drop off in sound quality as the rehearsal material begins. Whilst Goatlord are a hidden gem from an era where genre boundaries weren't so clearly defined, given the fact that better recordings of most of these songs can be found on other Goatlord releases, it's hard to see who this reissue would appeal to outside of the most diehard fans.

[4] TOM SAUNDERS

GALVANO 'Trail Of The Serpents'

CANDLELIGHT



Starting with 'The Gathering', Gothenburg's Galvano immediately barrel balls-first into a miasma of thunder-fucking chords and a

riff that shuffles like mountain men through the underbrush. Imagine a collision of old Mastodon and Kylesa smack dab into Matt Pike's sideburns. Parallel lines can be drawn between fellow two-man crushers Mantar as a rough-hewn southern shake (hooray for globalisation...?) colours their Orange amp tone and Mattias Nööjd's love of Mantas' (Venom) vibrato. However, with only four lengthy songs comprising this, their second album, the impact ends up being muted as slight variations on the same riff for ten-plus minutes without a solo, harmony riff or even bass lead fail to provide adequate variation.

[6.5] KEVIN STEWART-PANKO

GOBLIN REBIRTH 'Goblin Rebirth'

RELAPSE



The long, tangled tale of Goblin continues. Masterminded by original members Fabio Pignatelli and

Agostino Marangolo, this latest splinter group – coexisting with Claudio Simonetti's incarnation of the band – make their debut in suitably chilling style. Spectral choirs, blaring organs, labyrinthine bass-lines; 'Goblin Rebirth' harks back to the Italian band's *giallo* heydays, built around the kind of sinister keyboard motifs that made 'Suspiria', 'Profondo Rosso' et al so powerful. Yet it also boasts a grittier edge at times (as seen on the lurching grooves of 'Evil In The Machine'), and throws up a few surprises, from the eerily sophisticated 'Dark Bolero' to the mid-song crescendos of 'Book Of Skulls'. More than just an exercise in nostalgia, then.

[8] ROB SAYCE

TEENAGE TIME KILLERS 'Greatest Hits Vol. 1'

RISE

Less a supergroup than a living, breathing cross-section of underground music history, Teenage Time Killers announce themselves with a gleefully entertaining debut. Founded by Corrosion Of Conformity's Reed Mullin and My Ruin's Mick Murphy, the 'band' shifts in style and line-up from song to song: taking in everything from venomous crossover thrash ('Hung Out To Dry', featuring Lamb Of God's Randy Blythe on vocals) to melodic punk ('Barrio', with members of Alkaline Trio and Minor Threat) and brilliantly frazzled spoken word (Jello Biafra, on 'Ode To Hannity'). Dave Grohl handles bass duties on many of these twenty songs, and there's little of the ego-driven one-upmanship usually associated with such a project. Mike IX Williams spits fire on 'Time To



Die', 'Ignorant People' – with Tony Foresta, Greg Anderson and Nick Oliveri – is hyperfast and vicious, while at times it's almost like an old school C.O.C. record, which just happens to feature everyone under the sun. In short, this is a riot.

[8] ROB SAYCE

GUTTER INSTINCT 'The Insurrection'

PROSTHETIC



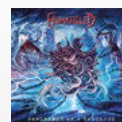
Despite being thoroughly caked in the gristly, acerbic vibrations of the early '90s, Gutter Instinct's subtle yet effective application of

blackened atmospheres and intoxicating grooves instantly establishes that this is no simple exercise in mindless retro metal. With battering blasts and viciously contorted tremolo subsiding beneath a cold undertow of frostbitten atmospherics, 'Under The Scythe' displays seamless ease in intermingling these respective dynamics. Bridging its barrelling leads with lurching, supersized slabs of bass and well-muscled grooves, the Swedes' finely-tuned ear for hooky, high-energy songwriting is keenly apparent throughout. Engineered with a deft counterbalancing of gritty authenticity and scalding clarity, theirs is a richly nostalgic yet structurally inventive slab of extremity.

[7] FAYE COULMAN

HUMANGLED 'Prodomes Of A Flatline'

BAKERTEAM



Humangled's debut 'Fractal' was a perfect example of a decent band sabotaged by their own lack of vision. Five years later,

many things have changed, including a national death metal scene now renowned for its OTT and overproduced brutality instead of these Italian's musical influences. But whereas they used to copy the early '90s technical sound of Pestilence and Death without fully understanding it, 'Prodomes Of A Flatline' sees them at last coming into their own, helped by the recent inclusion of a boisterous fretless bass player and Dan Swano's impeccable mix. Their vocalist may not have the best range in the world and that cover of Therion's 'To Mega Therion' may be totally out of place, but they're nevertheless on the right track.

[6] OLIVIER 'ZOLTAR' BADIN



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KEN MODE

'Success'

SEASON OF MIST

If the sixth album by Winnipeg pummellers **KEN mode** doesn't confer actual stardom on them, then perhaps it'll at least familiarise their name enough so people realise it's 'supposed' to be written like that. While the lower-case **M** remains unexplained, **KEN**'s purportedly an acronym of 'Kill Everyone Now'. Aside from the reference to Henry Rollins' 'Get In the Van', scholars of a particular strain of 1990s rock – noisy, yet very precise; influenced, perhaps, by jazz and prog; sardonic in its lyrics and presentation – might also recognise this as a song title by fellow Canadians Nomeansno. This also leads us into the direction **KEN mode** have taken for 'Success'.

Previously, their music had tended towards the metallic – as fast as it was fiddly, downtuned in the manner of Botch or Deadguy, say. This time, they're exploring their love of the kind of grouchy, muscular clang that filled the indie-store racks in 1993 or so. Jesse Matthewson's vocals, previously a metalcore



holler, are now a semi-spoken snarl – part Steve Albini (who recorded 'Success'), part Oxbow's Eugene Robinson (who guests on album opener 'Blessed'). There are quiet, calm-before-the-stormy parts ('Dead Actors'), Birthday Party gothic guitar raunch ('The Owl...'), a pinch of Three One G Records-style sassiness ('Failing At Fun Since 1981') and, with the closing 'Dead Actors', a token swelling epic, pleasingly reminiscent of old touring partners Taint.

KEN mode's switchup here may alienate old fans and attract new ones in equal measure. One could be hypercritical and suggest that paying tribute to the music they loved when younger isn't exactly progress, but they make darn fine noisierockers.

[7.5] NOEL GARDNER

THANK YOU BASS GOD

FRONTMAN JESSE MATTHEWSON ON WHAT NEW BASSIST SKOT HAMILTON HAS BROUGHT TO THE ALBUM

"Talking about the bassist is beginning to sound like a joke with us since we have a different person every bloody record. It's been going well, he joined early April of last year and we basically threw him through the ringer. We immediately started writing a new record, beat him up so he got into shape

for the live shows and started touring by the fall. He's a trooper, he wants to get out there. He's been playing music for a really long time locally, but never really done any international touring and he kinda jumped into the deep end with us. Especially being with two brothers who are notoriously... intense, we'll say. [laughs]"

LINDEMANN

'Skills In Pills'

WARNER BROS



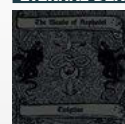
Not only is Till Lindemann's solo album hampered by bland industrial metal riffs and beats courtesy of Peter Dinklage, the sheer amount of lecherous Jimmy Savile-as-Dr. Seuss lines such as "It smells like fish, I take a sniff/The bait is fresh, my rod is stiff" really start to lose their intended humour fast. Rammstein successfully attempted something similar with 'Pussy', yet here, the cheekiness that made that song an anthem turns to creepiness across an album's worth of English-sung sexual innuendos, which could be forgivable if the music wasn't purely foundational for Lindemann's gilded baritone. It begs the question; besides money, why would Lindemann want to release a bunch of clichéd songs that wouldn't have made the cut as Rammstein b-sides?

[3] DEAN BROWN

THE MEADS OF ASPHODEL / TJOLGTJAR

'Taste The Divine Wrath'

ETERNAL DEATH



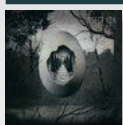
Two bonkers outfits go head to head on this split. Blighty's finest anti-religious crusaders The Meads embark on a historical and hysterical mission giving us a lesson in treason and blasphemy taking in intriguing characters such as Balthazar Gérard over a galloping, uncouth blackened tumult. A sassy cover of Florence & The Machine's 'You've Got The Love' by singer Tania Azevedo particularly hits the mark. By comparison Tjoltjar, a highly prolific US one-man act, may be just as eccentric but as far as execution is concerned, this mish-mash of ideas and styles with squawking helium gas vocals and lousy production comes across as more of a joke sitting on the wrong side of even being listenable.

[6] PETE WOODS

INSECT ARK

'Portal/Well'

AUTUMNSONGS



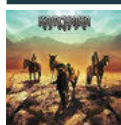
Drum and bass duo bands are having their day at present, and with the expansive, ominous atmosphere of 'Portal/Well', Insect Ark do a fine job of adding their own experimental edge to the growing genre. Masterminded by multi-instrumentalist and composer Dana Schechter, 'Portal/Well' creeps along with an imposing darkness, with Schechter's rich bass lines becoming a slowly pulsing lifeline throughout the album, bleeding the eight instrumental tracks into one smothering entity. This gives the album a hypnotic seamlessness, structuring the record into a crawling soundscape that brings to mind images of grayscale urban decay and psychological despair. A powerfully evocative debut.

[7.5] RICH TAYLOR

KAMCHATKA

'Long Road Made Of Gold'

DESPOTZ



This Swedish trio have been flaunting their bluesy grooves and vintage vibe for yonks now. This is their sixth album and, as ever, you can hear echoes of Clutch, Led Zeppelin, ZZ Top, Whitesnake, Witchcraft, Kyuss, Magnum and Grand Funk Railroad. But Kamchatka never fall victim to nostalgia – instead, they stir in smart, modern stoner and proggy elements to the classic/southern rock mix. The music's elegant simplicity is often its most compelling feature, although in one or two places things can get a little elementary. The bass of Per Wilborg (ex-Opheth, Spiritual Beggars) adds muscle and Thomas Andersson's big riffs are so effortlessly cool you can't help but love them. Great blues rock.

[7] STEVE BIDMEAD

IWRESTLEDABEARONCE

'Hail Mary'

ARTERY



Circumventing categorization since 2007, Iwrestledabearonce are back to challenge you and your phone's autocorrect. Few bands are brave enough to wholeheartedly sacrifice popularity for the sake of musical integrity, and these Louisiana loonies' fourth studio album 'Hail Mary' is yet more evidence that they belong to this courageous minority. Vocalist Courtney LaPlante's vast stylistic scope is nothing shy of jaw-dropping, as she elevates the listener with breathtaking melodies in the epic two-part 'Doomed To Fall', before crashing to the ground like a ton of bricks in the relentlessly aggressive grindcore of 'Killed To Death'. Interestingly, the unpredictable nature of this record extends to its surprising listenability. Still, be warned, as this product definitely contains nuts.

[6.5] RAY HOLROYD

KARMA VIOLENS

'Skin Of Existence'

ROAR!/ROCK OF ANGELS



The second full length from Greek extreme metallers Karma Violen's is a well-crafted testament to the band's musicianship and creativity. Bringing together slices of black, thrash and melodic death metal, 'Skin Of Existence' has just the right amount of speed for its technical riffs and slower paced harmonic sections to keep things interesting, with 'Floating In Sadness' being just one example of their musical ability. Heavy guitar work, powerful drumming and an obvious difference in vocal ranges guide you through, and with the band having worked with Daniel Castleman (Pathology, Zao etc), it's no surprise that it has the ability to bleed your ears after one complete run through. Definitely an album worth adding to your collection.

[7] EMILY BIELBY

VANUM

'Realm Of Sacrifice'

PROFOUND LORE

While Vanum may be a new name to American black metal, the musicians behind the project have come together from backgrounds in some of the genre's most acclaimed bands. A collaboration between Ash Borer's K. Morgan and M. Rekevics of Fell Voices, Vanum fuse USBM's most captivating elements into the hypnotically atmospheric 'Realm Of Sacrifice'; a record that proves just how inspired the notion partnering Rekevics' rampant drumming with Morgan's swirling and heart-wrenching riffery was.

'Realm Of Ascension' begins the onslaught, blending the best of WITTR-esque melody with a sorrowful and immersive wall of sound before flowing into the stargazing grandiosity of 'In Immaterial Flame'. The combination of Morgan's dynamic playing and Rekevics' organic percussive performance imbues 'Realm Of Sacrifice' with a more powerful and captivating



authenticity than so much modern BM, with the searing triumph of 'Convergence' and the title tracks' evocative roar and introspection completing a powerful sonic journey. Four tracks of viscerally emotive and gripping extremity – what more could you expect?

[8] RICH TAYLOR

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LUCIFER

'Lucifer I'

RISE ABOVE

One album, one major tour and an unimpeachable legacy. The Oath's reign was all too brief, and it's a crying shame that we'll never know where that particular mystery train was headed. However, an element of their Satanic majesty lives on in Lucifer: the new band of Johanna Sadonis, with one eye set on the recent past and another on the soulful glories of '70s rock mysticism. What's more, erstwhile Cathedral guitarist Gaz Jennings is along for the ride — worshipping at the altar of Sabbath once more, joined by Angel Witch drummer Andy Prestidge.

While recent years have seen cascades of 'occult rock' groups busting out their Ouija boards and drowning themselves in dry ice, Lucifer have a good deal more staying power. Dialling back the punk influences of The Oath, the four-piece imbue songs like 'White Mountain' with a timeless melancholy; Sadonis's vocals soaring above fuzzy, monolithic riffs, closer in tone to Blue Öyster Cult than Electric Wizard.



Behind the hype — and there's been a lot of it — this is a proper, tried and true heavy metal album, from the driving opening riffs and tempo-shifts of 'Abracadabra' to the spine-tingling melodies of 'Izrael' and deathly bell chimes of 'Sabbath'. If you turned up 'Lucifer I' at a second hand record store you might reckon it was a lost classic from decades back, and that's no bad thing. It's not innovative, but it is mightily potent: and in an age of overabundance, their doomy, eerily addictive approach should pay dividends.

[8.5] ROB SAYCE

THE BANNERS OF OLD

VOCALIST JOHANNA SADONIS ON HER BLACK METAL PAST

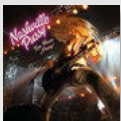
"For me the black and death metal stuff was in the '90s when I was a teenager. Sure, I still dig old black metal bands like Mayhem or Darkthrone and so on, but for me, musically, I've gone through a lot of phases in the last twenty years. And the older I get, the more I realise that the great music

lies in the past, that everything in the heavy metal and hard rock scenes is built on these forefathers, and the older I get the more back in time I go in music, digging up all the old bands. The original spirit and fire in those bands is so amazing to me. I would definitely never go back to being in a black metal band, that's for sure."

NASHVILLE PUSSY

'Ten Years Of Pussy'

STEAMHAMMER/SPV



Want a great record to drink to before heading out? Pop on '10 Years Of Pussy' and allow yourself to get swept away with songs about drinking, fucking and fighting. Lemmy sites them as one of his favourite bands and claims that they were the perfect choice to open for the legendary Motörhead; he even features on the track 'Lazy Jesus'. The band's sound is, in fairness, pretty generic, but it delivers high energy sleaze rock and tonnes of slur-a-long goodness. All the top hits are included, such as 'Go To Hell' and 'Come On Come On' and there's a great cover of 'Nutbush City Limits' on the bonus live disc. Fans will love it.

[8] AMY HARRIS

NUCLEAR ASSAULT

'Pounder'

SIDIPUS/DRY HEAVE



If you don't know what an EP called 'Pounder' by a band called Nuclear Assault is going to sound like, then you've probably picked up the wrong magazine in the newsagents. Yes, the production is rather primitive, and yes, it sounds a tad throwaway in places, but Nuclear Assault always teetered on the brink of thrash metal and punk, so that 'Who gives a fuck?' attitude comes with the territory. And the four tracks on offer here break no new ground — old dogs and new tricks and all that — but 'Lies' crunches along like some 'Game Over' outtake, 'Pounder' is a loving ode to heavy metal, and 'Died In Your Arms' is a weighty slice of melancholia.

[7.5] IAN GLASPER

NIGHTSLUG

'Loathe'

DRY COUGH



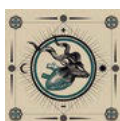
Beneath Nightslug's gnarly layers of gut-punch sludge and distorted screams lies the beating heart of a noise rock band. These dismal fuckers pump so much feedback and bad intentions into their music that, at times, the end result sounds like white noise coming from a coffin full of battered electrical appliances. This will either be a major selling point or something that will turn you off completely. But for the tinnitus-damaged audience Nightslug are aiming for on their second album 'Loathe', songs such as 'Vile Pegs' and the aptly titled 'Disease' should quench their thirst for toxic sounds. Tighten the songwriting slightly and this German act could become completely carcinogenic.

[7.5] DEAN BROWN

OHHMS

'Cold'

HOLY ROAR



OHHMS grabbed attention last year with their debut 'Bloom' EP, yet the follow-up 'Cold' is a markedly more interesting, boundary-blending and dynamic beast. 'The Anchor' and 'Dawn Of The Swarm', the album's sole two compositions, clock in at eighteen and fourteen minutes respectively, yet the sound is far removed from slow, meandering doom, with OHHMS filling their songs with more than enough riffs, transitions and vocal outbursts to warrant being described as truly progressive. Blending Jesu-esque ambience with cosmic-nod inducing stoner metal riffery and composition that will make Tool fans turn their heads, delivered with the emotional conviction dripping from Paul Weller's voice, 'Cold' shows OHHMS to be a band more than deserving of the praise flowing toward them.

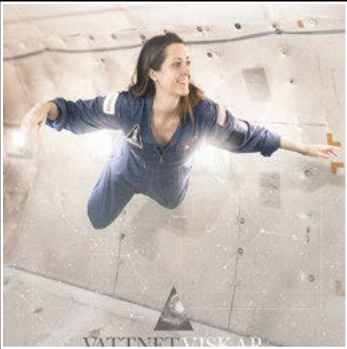
[7] RICH TAYLOR

VATTNET VISKAR

'Settler'

CENTURY MEDIA

Everything about 'Settler' hints at expansion, reinvention and a refreshingly outside-the-box approach to Vattnet Viskar's already unusual M.O. From the joyous yet heart-wrenchingly sad photo of Christa McAuliff on the cover to the evocative one-word titles, it's clear the New Hampshire quartet have pulled out the few remaining stops after 2013's affecting 'Sky Swallow'. It's hard to find them a comfortable genre tag — 'Settler's' songs each feature a distinctive mood that sets them all apart. Be it a more orchestral bombast ('Heirs'), a more desperate, strained post-metal atmosphere ('Yearn') or the black metal remnants of 'Impact',



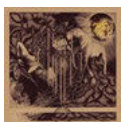
they nevertheless feel part of the same whole, expertly captured by Sanford Parker. Vattnet Viskar expertly combine light and darkness on one of this year's surprising highlights.

[8.5] JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

PALE CHALICE

'Negate The Infinite And Miraculous'

GILEAD



San Francisco black metal outfit Pale Chalice have been rather inactive since their first EP, 'Afflicting The Dichotomy Of Trepid Creation', which was well received within the USBM scene back in 2011. Now, after a four year period of silence they have released their debut album 'Negate The Infinite And Miraculous'. It's a standard modern American offering full of driving guitar and a polished production allowing for crystal-clear immersion, should the listener want. Pale Chalice are obviously skilled musicians and the album's cover art is simply stunning, but unless being presented to a longtime fan of the genre, the repetitive nature of this may unfortunately fall upon deaf ears.

[6] BETH AVISON

PAVILLON ROUGE

'Legio Axis Ka'

DOWEET RECORDS



France is no stranger to producing industrial blackened metal acts as the likes of Blacklodge, The CNK, N.K.V.D and Otargos have proved. Here's another one, and Pavillon Rouge blend the elements together to bring us a thumping soundtrack full of metallic licks and jackhammer pounds that's really quite a seamless transition between two musical mind-sets. Injecting elements of trance, techno, dark wave, industrial and even bursts of hardcore gabber into their 'A l'Univers', it's a bouncy and impetuous sound that's guaranteed to bring clubbers out of their dark corners and cause a bit of a mosh pit live. Somehow they even manage to cheekily leave us smiling with a cover of Coolio's 'Notre Paradis'!

[6.5] PETE WOODS



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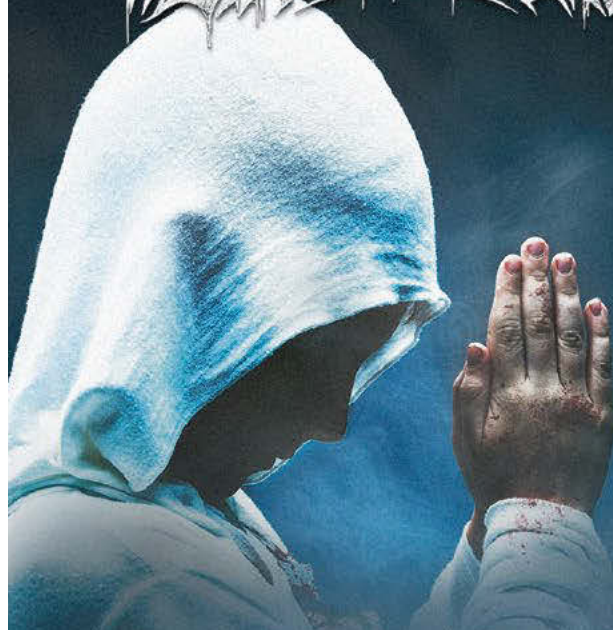
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EARTH BLUES

SPIRITUAL BEGGARS REISSUES REVIEWED

POWERWOLF 'Blessed & Possessed'

NAPALM

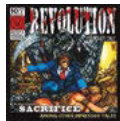


Supercharged power metal from a German band who are known for their dark imagery, themes and vampire/werewolf stories, could only mean one thing: Powerwolf. Back with another outing that drowns itself in religious sarcasm, 'Blessed & Possessed' delivers the established sound we know and love and for that we are thankful, as we're not sure a change in sound is to occur anytime soon. Attention grabbers 'Army Of The Night' and 'Higher Than Heaven' are the obvious quicker tracks with 'Armata Strigoli' taking the riff award. However, the record's not shy of infectious riffs which seem to up the tempo, and if that doesn't leave you involuntarily head banging, the ridiculously over the top choruses will hopefully have you chanting uncontrollably at high volume.

[7.5] EMILY BIELBY

REVOLUTION 'Sacrifice'

SELF-RELEASE



Revolution hail from Miami, but there's nothing sunny about their hard-nosed metallic hardcore. Produced by Billy from Biohazard, whose influence permeates every note, this is brutally simplistic and muscular, snarling and spitting and tough as nails. From the first chord of opener 'Visions', there are heavy hints of Pro-Pain, in the raw, bellowed vocals (shut your eyes and you could be listening to Gary Meskil's violent bark), the chugging riffs, the rock solid rhythms, and the aggressive gang backing vocals, although elsewhere there are hints of Wargasm, Madball and even Crowbar in the uncompromising punishing delivery. There's little deviation from their tried and tested formula, but if driving grooves and neck-snapping beatdowns are your thing, this hits the spot.

[7] IAN GLASPER

PRO-PAIN 'Voice Of Rebellion'

SPV/STEAMHAMMER



Q: How much meat and potatoes hardcore is there to go around? A: Fifteen albums and twenty-four years worth, apparently. New York's metallic hardcore elder statesmen continue to truck on like that middle-of-the-pack marathon runner who knows he'll never catch the Kenyans, but still has stamina and love for his craft despite being on the edges of the spotlight. Gary Meskil and crew still deliver thick and juicy riffs wrapped in urban anger and awesome solos, though the perpetual sledgehammer groove and drill press kicks contribute to a lack of nuance and singularity that can make these fourteen tracks an endurance test. However, there are copious moments that'll go down well during your next backyard wrestling bout.

[7] KEVIN STEWART-PANKO

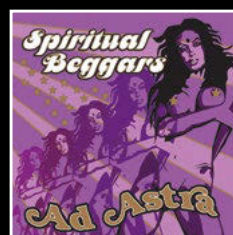
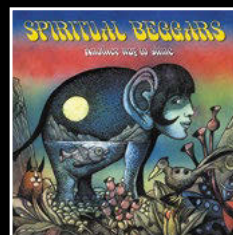
SATANIC RIPPER 'Southern Black Spells'

BLOOD HARVEST



Satanic Ripper have termed their music 'evil grave metal', which is either a consequence of English not being their first language – they're from Chile – or a good-natured send-up of genre lingo being, essentially, arbitrary and silly. That said, as word association games go it's a decent fit. This debut album, released on a Chilean label last year and repressed on vinyl by Blood Harvest, serves up stomping, demented black metal that sounds plucked from the late-'80s South American underground, with post-Sodom thrash primitivism swirling in the mixer. Opening with an eight-minute song, thereafter Satanic Ripper are far more to the point, barely catching their breath amidst spirited talk of (album highlight) 'Insane Satanic Screams' and suchlike.

[7.5] NOEL GARDNER



It's a shame that the selection of four Spiritual Beggars albums for which Music For Nations has the rights to reissue – with new visuals, liner notes and the whole nine yards, so it's done right – couldn't do a little shift left on the chronology line. 2002's 'On Fire' [6.5] isn't a terrible album, but it's far removed from the vibe that envelops the previous three albums like a cloud of smoke. Not only is it the first Beggars album without Christian "Spice" Sjöstrand on vocals – an important part of the personality established by the band on these first releases – but it's also a step outside the smoky retro rock jams the band sculpted to perfection before it, no matter how good JB Christofferson actually sounded on it replacing Spice. With that little shift, we'd also have gotten the self-titled debut (which is sort of an EP, but still), which would have been much more appropriate. Nevertheless, it's still a pleasure to have these albums on vinyl finally. Of the four, only 'Ad Astra' had been released on this format before, and while we don't really engage in format wars here, it's obvious that Spiritual Beggars really do belong on vinyl more than most bands we could mention. 1996's 'Another Way To Shine' [8] is perhaps the one that most benefits from this revitalisation, as not only it is the less praised of the classic trio of albums, but the warmth and delightful crackle provided by the vinyl gives songs like 'Magic Spell' or 'Misty Valley' a completely new feeling. Tell anyone unfamiliar with the band that these are tunes from a '70s band you just discovered and everyone will believe you. It was the first album on which the band actually started to jam as a means of writing songs, and by the time 'Mantra III' [8.5] came around in 1998, they were at their loosest and wildest form ever. The joy Spice talks about in our interview in this issue is evident as classic after Beggars classic are laid out. 'Euphoria', 'Send Me A Smile' or the delightfully meandering closer 'Mushroom Tea Girl' are the pure expression of a band having fun with themselves, playing the music they enjoy without worrying what it'll be called, or what influences might be detected or not by scrutinising press and fans. It's just a bunch of sunny, psychedelic rock outs to crank up whenever you have a beer or a spliff in your hand, or friends around you, or both preferably. It might be the most innocently joyful album of the bunch, but 2000's 'Ad Astra' [9] tops it on sheer musical quality alone. It's like the

kid from 'Mantra III' but all grown up, and grown up right too. 'Left Brain Ambassadors' or 'Wonderful World', among many others, are still staples in the Beggars' live show of today, and the performances from the entire band are career highlights. More Black Sabbath-y than ever, densely atmospheric, enthusiastic yet with a dark streak too, it's the pick of the bunch still (of their entire discography, not just these reissues). Worth getting even if you already have it on the original wax and everything.

WORDS: JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

PROFANATOR 'Mvttter Vicivm'

CHAOS



Bear in mind that Profanator hail from Mexico and once released a cassette EP entitled 'Shit On The Cross', and you'll have a decent idea of the ultra-raw blackened fury on offer here, so fast and crazy it's more grindcore than thrash. If such semantics interest you, that is – if not, just know that this is violent primal extreme metal, with the emphasis on 'extreme'. Whilst this is quite a sonic progression from their 'Libido Clerico' debut, it feels a natural follow-on from 'Deathplagued', conjuring the disorienting density and intensity so often the preserve of South American metal bands. Like the sample at the beginning of 'Wormed' intones, "I hate happy music..." No kidding.

[8] IAN GLASPER

SHAPE OF DESPAIR 'Monotony Fields'

SEASON OF MIST



Eleven friggin' years. That's how long it took for Shape Of Despair to reclaim the throne they had conquered in the early '00s. If these Finns weren't the only ones who helped define funeral doom in the first place – Thergothon, Evoken and Skepticism deserve that credit too – their 2000 debut remains unique to this day. And thankfully – despite the insane amount of time it took them to complete that fourth full-length and the inclusion of another vocalist, Henri from Throes Of Dawn – the way they manage to fuse perfectly excruciating and almost painful doom with superb and blissful dark ambient is intact and still mesmerizing. Welcome back our dearest friend of misery, it's been too long.

[8] OLIVIER 'ZOLTAR' BADIN

THEOKTONY 'Loss'

DISSECTED



Manipulating strains of jarring reverb and tremolo-flecked contortions with tautly controlled aplomb, the technical complexities that abound in Theoktony's mind-boggling compositions require no small amount of careful deciphering. Above a dense backbone of blastbeats, acrobatic flurries of arpeggios weave frantic configurations as lacerating guitar accents whiplash the senses into submission. With 'Apostate's sun-scorched lashings of Far Eastern phrasing and fluid guitar leads adding intensity to this battering formula, the unrelenting speed and heavily complex character of these pieces creates an occasionally indecipherable feel. That said, the precision that underlines their insanely paced fare makes for a nonetheless vicious and technically adept outing.

[6.5] FAYE COULMAN

THY ART IS MURDER 'Holy War'

NUCLEAR BLAST



'Holy War' is a well executed deathcore album which shines brightest during its fastest and most technical moments. It's never overbearingly technical though, with riffs being more along the lines of Decapitated than, say, Rings Of Saturn. The two real standout tracks are 'Absolute Genocide' and 'Naked And Cold', the opening and closing tracks respectively. 'Naked And Cold' is melodic and epic, which makes it a great closer – 'Absolute Genocide' on the other hand, is one of the most aggressive tracks on the album, making it a perfect opener. Overall, 'Holy War' is an easy recommendation for fans of deathcore or modern groovy death metal like Decapitated.

[7] TOM SAUNDERS



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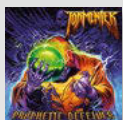



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TORMENTER 'Prophetic Deceiver'

EBM



You can almost picture the black metal elite spitting venom when they see a band called Tormenter, whose name bears a close resemblance to the cult act that gave us Attila Csihar. Yet one look at the cover to 'Prophetic Deceiver', originally self-released in 2014, and you'd immediately guess that Tormenter play thrash metal, probably of the Teutonic variety. And you wouldn't be far off the mark: Tormenter do take plenty of inspiration from Sodom and Destruction, but the El Monte, California band also show their understanding of Bay Area thrash and, vocally, there's a definite death metal streak that gives 'Prophetic Deceiver' a mix of melody and extreme edge. Overall, it's certainly nothing new, but it's executed well.

[7] DEAN BROWN

UNLEASH THE ARCHERS 'Time Stands Still'

NAPALM

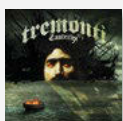


Unleash the Archers' label debut makes it clear why Napalm snapped up the Canadian quintet – with virtuosic guitar noodling, forays into snarling blast-ridden territory and the striking vocal acrobatics of Brittney Slayes, the band offer a modern expansion on power metal's traditional sound. 'Time Stands Still' combines elements of melodic death with power metal's bombast and sing-along factor. Slaves' vocal power and style prove an impressive force, packing each track with aggression and energy while reinforcing just how utterly meaningless the 'female fronted' tag is. A vibrant display of commanding heavy metal, even the most hardened power-cynic should find something to like here.

[7] RICH TAYLOR

TREMONTI 'Cauterize'

FRET12



Former Creed guitarist Mark Tremonti returns with his second attempt at making us forget he's the former Creed guitarist, complete with a bucket-load of hype about how much "heavier" and "more speed-metal influenced" his new project is compared to the radio-rock dreck of his previous God bothering outfit. What this means in actuality, however, is that the expected saccharine choruses and boyband harmonies are awkwardly interspersed with bouts of tedious shred soloing and thrash riffs so generic your local high-school Metallica worship band would have discarded them immediately. All well and good if you're twelve years old and view Avenged Sevenfold as the pinnacle of heaviness, but come on; you're a Terrorizer reader. You should demand better.

[2] KEZ WHELAN

WHEN 'The Black Death'

IDEOLOGIC ORGAN



This strange and captivating record may date from 1992, yet it's aesthetically firmly rooted in the year 1349, when the great plague began to decimate Norway's population. Constructed entirely by Lars Pedersen and inspired by artwork by Theodor Kittelsen, it's an eerie musique concrete collage of groans, creaking wood, percussive dementia, choral elegies and what sounds very much like a jaw-harp. Whilst it owes more to the absurdist and avant likes of Nurse With Wound, Foetus' orchestral work and the creepy racket of The Residents than anything metallic, it comes as no surprise that this atmospheric yet abject work found fans in the nascent black metal community in the era of its release.

[8] JIMMY MARTIN

TYRANT GOATGALDRAKONA 'Horns In The Dark'

BLOOD HARVEST



How incomprehensible band name, Batman! Comprising two spiked gauntlet-wearing Hungarians who go by the names Hellfire Commander Of Eternal War And Pain and Grave Desecration And Necrosodomy, perhaps the most surprising thing about Tyrant Goatamawotsit is that they aren't a third-rate Blasphemy knock-off, but rather a halfway decent death metal band. The duo's thick guitar sound and no-nonsense blasting evokes a classic Swedish vibe, albeit with hints of Incantation also seeping through. It's not the most original sound around, but 'Horns In The Dark' is steadfastly dark, heavy and unpretentious, and sometimes that's enough.

[7] MIKE KEMP

WIEGEDOOD 'De Doden Hebben Het Goed'

CONSOLING SOUNDS



The line-up producing this music is unlikely – Levy Seynaeve (Amenra), Gilles Demolder (Oathbreaker) and Wim Coppers (Rise And Fall) aren't who you'd imagine starting a band together on some Church Of Ra picnic and have it sound like Wolves In The Throne Room, but that's what this is. It's unfair to reduce it like that, as just the earth-shattering beginning to 'Kwaad Bloed' would be enough to justify any praise, but the peaks and valleys of melody, melancholy and fury, the "rural" feel and even the four-song structure all hark back to the masters. There are many worse things to evoke than WITTR, however, and Wiegedood are among the best at it, so we're not really complaining.

[7.5] JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

WILLIAM ENGLISH 'Basic Human Error'

GRANDAD



Imagine Eyehategod without codeine, whiskey and black tar heroin contributing to their sound. Or weed being a non-factor in Weedeater. Or everyone in Buzzcocks being on a level psychological plane. Basically, subtract the negativity from sludge metal and there's Norfolk's William English. 'Basic Human Error' is still filthy brass knuckle blues with anguished Nyquil-shredded vocals topping the attack, but in this quintet's corner is a sense of tautness their forefathers found difficult to achieve. Indeed, dread and scuzz drapes 'Captain Tugboat' and 'Grandpa Sorrow', but the feeling that it's going to come crashing down in a vein-collapsing heap isn't a lurking concern. Purists may scoff at the notion of safety in their sludge, but a little stability never hurt anyone.

[7.5] KEVIN STEWART-PANKO

WOODEN STAKE 'A Feast Of Virgin Souls'

RAZORBACK



Four years after the US death/doom duo's debut 'Dungeon Prayers & Tombyard Serenades', guitarist/drummer Wayne Sarantopoulos has been replaced with William Wardlaw on their second album – although given how much bassist Vanessa Nocera's distinctive vocals steal the show, you'd be forgiven for not even noticing. Ranging from soaring, Candlemass-esque bravado to gruff growls and tormented screams, her eerie voice adds a lot to these songs, which recall the classic doom songcraft of Trouble fused with the deathly aura of Asphyx or even early Paradise Lost (check out 'Hanging From The Inverted Cross'). Their sound is still a little rough around the edges, but it all adds to the deliciously ominous atmosphere these two produce. Shrouded in old-school charm, there's much to love here.

[7.5] KEZ WHELAN



Those lovely people at Plastic Head have dropped a whole load of punky goodness on us recently. 'Another Live Album From The Damned' [7.5, SOUTHWORLD] is just what it says on the tin, a beautifully recorded and packaged double-disc live offering, featuring over twenty of The Damned's best loved tunes – and a few of their more obscure ones too.



Staying with the live releases, fans of The Exploited are in for a treat, with the classic live album, 'On Stage' [7, LET THEM EAT VINYL] getting a deluxe gatefold vinyl release, on splattered pink and white vinyl no less. The 'Dogs Of War: Live' [7.5] LP is also reissued on tasteful grey wax, and the 'Apocalypse Tour 1981' [6.5] on marbled red. This is genuine UK82 balls-to-the-wall punk rock captured live in the raw, so it's completely rough and ready, but these new versions are just too sumptuous to pass up. And the 24-track 'best of' collection, 'Totally Exploited' [8] gets the double-album treatment, one white, one red, a riotous compilation of some of the band's very best yobbo anthems.



Bringing things more up to date, The Fiend have had their recent 'Greed-Power-Religion-War' album [8] remastered and repackaged by Candelight, and if you missed it first time round, don't be caught napping again, because this is thirteen tracks of truly blistering metallic punk that is absolutely relentless in its intensity.



The aptly-named Punk Records have issued 'Punk Disorder Chaos Destruction' [7.5] by The Vile, which features their Havoc Records' 7" and 12" from 2014, plus the two slobbering Pistols covers they released in 2012 to 'celebrate' the Jubilee. This manages to be both powerful and tuneful, and demands repeated listening.



Boss Tuneage round off their most welcome series of reissues by legendary fruitcakes, Doctor And The Crippens, with 'Cabaret Style' [7], thirty-two tracks culled from the band's various demos, compilation and EP appearances. Fans of the band's jarringly creative, left-field take on UKHC should lap this up, as should anyone who finds punk just a little bit, er, predictable these days.



Doctor Bison are also getting the Boss Tuneage treatment, with their entire discography captured across two remastered reissues, the first of which is 'The Bloated Vegas Years' [8]. For those that don't know, Doctor Bison was how The Abs from Newport sounded when they teamed up with Dickie Hammond from Leatherface and HDQ. The result was just as you imagine: loud, abrasive but supremely melodic and listenable, and these songs from their first three releases in the mid-Nineties have really stood the test of time.



Infinitely nastier and noisier, Warwound have also had their 1983 demos compiled on the ultra-raw 'A Huge Black Cloud: The Demos 1983' [7.5, BOSS TUNEAGE], which is 25 tracks of pure UK82-style hardcore thrash, sure to appeal to fans of early Chaos UK and Sacrilege.



Rounding off with some brand new releases, the ever-green UK Subs have their 'Yellow Leader' album [7] released by Captain Oi! Fronted by the inimitable Charlie Harper, now in his seventies, they still manage to sound joyously fresh and vital.



Chelsea are another bunch of veterans still writing great tunes on 'Saturday Night Sunday Morning' [6.5, WESTWORLD]; although it may be a tad too polite for Terrorizer readers, if you dig The Business and Cock Sparrer, you'll be singing along in no time.



Lastly, The Spoilers are a new pop punk band from Kent, but don't let the 'pop' word put you off, because they peddle totally infectious melodic hardcore in the vein of Snuff and Southport, and their debut MCD, 'Stay Afloat' [8, BOSS TUNEAGE] is possibly the catchiest punk record you'll hear this year.



IAN GLASPER

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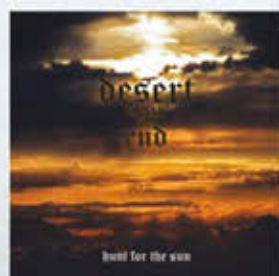


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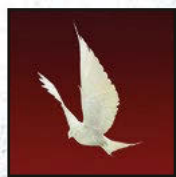
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TORCHE

TORCHE HAVE BEEN SMASHING THEIR UK DATES, SO TERRORIZER CAUGHT UP WITH DRUMMER RICK SMITH JUST AFTER THEIR BARNSTORMING TEMPLES PERFORMANCE – AND HE PROVED HIMSELF TO BE A MASSIVE CLOSET BLACK METAL HEAD...

Words: Ross Baker Pics: Christian Ravel



FLOOR

'Namaste' FROM 'DOVE' (NO IDEA, 2004)

Torche man Steve Brooks used to be in Floor. Given that the band re-formed and released an album last year, this should prove a no-brainer for Rick...

Ryan: "[Just thirteen seconds in] 'Namaste', Floor! That's one of my favourite Floor songs. Interesting drums and super cool riffs. Before I jammed with Steve I was a big fan. This song is where the 'Dove' record really takes off. When they did the first reunion, they made a point of playing this. I wish Torche would cover this song!"



CAVITY

'Supercollider' FROM 'SUPERCOLLIDER' (MAN'S RUIN, 1999)

With Steve Brooks and former Torche alumni like Juan Montoya having been a part of this band over the years, surely Ryan will recognise this number.

Ryan: "Cavity, 'Supercollider'. Two out of the three members of Floor are on this. Cavity have started

playing again and I am helping them get some gigs lined up. I loved this before I used to know any of those guys. It's great to be involved with them."



CONVERGE

'Jane Doe' FROM 'JANE DOE' (EQUAL VISION, 2001)

An obvious one as Kurt Ballou produced Torches' 'Neanderthal' opus but will Rick continue his hot streak?

Rick: "[After about a minute] Converge? Er..."
It's from 'Jane Doe'.

Rick: "Awesome. This is the record where they really found their sound. Converge paved the way for hardcore music. There were a handful of unique sounding hardcore bands with a metallic edge and they were better. It's later on in the album I know."

It's 'Jane Doe', the title track.

Rick: "Ah I nearly got it. Why choose that?"

Kurt Ballou produced you before.

Rick: "I think the last record may be the final one we end up working with him on. We are looking for a different sound now. We like his stuff and we have toured with Converge a lot. He has a very distinct style of mixing. I just think we want to go for a different sound on the next album, but he's a great guy."



RUSSIAN CIRCLES

'Carpe' FROM 'ENTER' (FLAMESHOVEL, 2006)

Torche toured with Russian Circles earlier in the year –

but how well does Rick know his post rock?

Rick: "This is the first one that's stumped me. I have no idea!"

You've toured with them in the past.

Rick: "It's got a post rock vibe. Great drumming. If I had to guess who it was I would say... Russian Circles?"

"I AM AN ELITIST ASSHOLE WHEN IT COMES TO THAT SHIT"

"BLACK METAL HAS BECOME A PARODY OF ITSELF"



Correct. Do you know the track?

Rick: "No idea."

It's 'Carpe' from 'Enter'.

Rick: "I didn't know this one. I could definitely hear their sound. We played with them earlier this year. I am not a huge fan of instrumental post rock music, but I think they're super cool, great guys!"



PIG DESTROYER

'Natascha' FROM 'TERRIFYER' (RELAPSE, 2004)

Let's see if Rick knows his grindcore; given that also he plays grind in Shitstorm, will Rick get this band? We've been a bit

naughty choosing the track PD are playing in tonight's set. After a strong start it appears Rick is stumped.

Rick: "[After the intro] If it stays like this, it sounds like 90% of what I am used to. It's a great ambient track. Does it pick up? It sounds cool."

This song isn't typical of this band. They're playing Temples.

Rick: "I have no idea. Can I get another hint?"

They normally play grindcore...

Rick: "Is this the doom song Pig Destroyer did? I just heard this recently at the Relapse office. I was talking to people and drinking so I didn't focus that much. The vocals aren't typical for them at all. A great noise rock vibe. I would have preferred a more lo-fi drum sound than such a crisp super metal production."



PORTAL

'Curtain' FROM 'VEXOVOID' (PROFOUND LORE, 2013)

Continuing with the Temples theme we have blackened death metallers, Portal, weighing in with some dissonant noise. Will nocturnal black metal be something Rick enjoys given the melodic and accessible nature of Torche?

Rick: "This is pretty punishing. Is this Portal? They're awesome! Is this off their latest record? I have some of their early cassette tapes. I have followed them from the early days. I am an elitist asshole when it comes to that shit. I grew up in Florida with

death metal so I was into black metal very early on. I feel like black metal has become a parody of itself until recently. Portal are in a league of their own. The way they incorporate the filthiness of Beherit and Immolation is incredible!"



THESE ARMS ARE SNAKES

'Horse Girl' FROM 'EASTER' (JADE TREE, 2006)

Another of Brian Cook's bands. Will Rick find this easier than Russian Circles?

Rick: "Man, I have no idea what this is at all! I imagine from the guitar sound it would be These Arms Are Snakes or something?!"

Correct!

Rick: "I don't know the track. I can't say I am a fan of the band and own their records but I can pick them out from the sound of the guitar or vocals. I was a fan of Botch, but I wasn't into these guys that much. I think it was just that this wasn't what I was looking for at the time!"



KEN MODE

'Blessed' FROM 'SUCCESS' (SEASON OF MIST, 2015)

Staying with the metallic hardcore vibe, Canada's KEN mode will take the stage at Temples a couple of hours from when this interview is over. Will Rick be familiar with them?

Rick: "No idea what this is. [The vocals kick in.] Shit... It sounds like Lubricated Goat!"

Nope. Any other guesses?

Rick: "No idea, are you sure it's not the new Lubricated Goat album?!"

It's KEN mode.

Rick: "The bass and guitars are great on this. So crushing. I haven't heard this record yet but it's a great track by a super underrated band!"



FINAL SCORE: 70%

A strong showing from the Torche sticksman, who reveals himself to be quite the closet extreme metal fan.

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Fifteen minutes, no limits. One point for each artist and another for the song. Scores given as a percentage. No Arguments.

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PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS

'Mercy' (2006, Abacus)

DEATHWISH HAVE JUST REISSUED THIS (ALMOST) FORGOTTEN GEM AND TO CELEBRATE
TERRORIZER CHATS TO FRONTMAN GARED O'DONNELL ABOUT WHY THIS ALBUM IS
JUST SO GOOD!

WORDS: JOSÉ CARLOS SANTOS

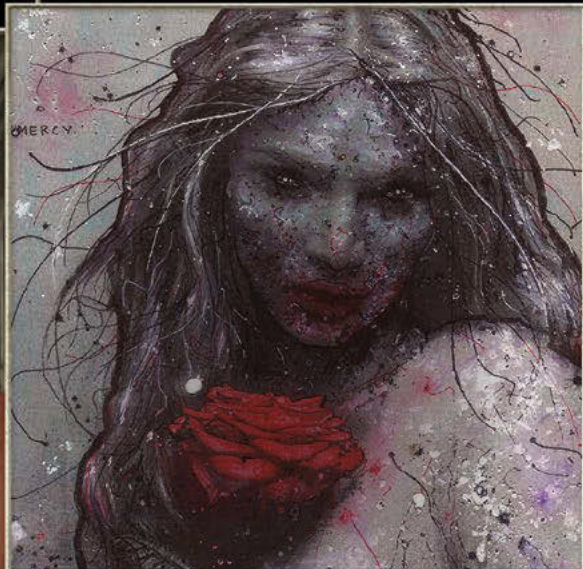
Planes Mistaken For Stars were one of the most unique bands of any scene. Aggressive yet melodic, called everything from post-hardcore to noise rock to whatever else, the raw emotion and profound impact of their records made them one of our most missed bands of the past decade or so. Especially because they disbanded after their definitive statement (so far), the unforgettable 'Mercy', which branded the year of 2006 with its powerful and yet despaired hymns. The last few years, however, have seen good news coming from the Planes Mistaken For Stars

camp – not only is the band back together playing shows (which they did sporadically throughout the years), but new material is being prepared, and now, Deathwish is reissuing 'Mercy' with revamped packaging and a fantastic remastering job that makes it even better than we remember it.

"When I've had too much to drink and I get a little sentimental, I'll revisit a bit, but as a rule I don't really listen to my music very often," reveals vocalist Jared O'Donnell, his voice as rough and unmistakable as ever, but without that palpable angst ever-present in his singing. Even if he doesn't

spin it very often, however, 'Mercy' is still very much present in his mind.

"I think it's the most focused piece of work we ever did. I'm proud of all the records we did, but 'Mercy' was kind of the most personal overall, and the most intense too, sonically and emotionally," he says. "At the time, I didn't know it, but the whole thing is all a true story. Every song is very real. Even stuff that hadn't happened in my life yet, it happened very shortly after. It was kind of self-prophesying." Yet, it was not all pitch black – like all the best functioning bands, the output and



even the circumstances might be bleak, but the actual creation of the music gives it its bright spot of hope.

"We had a lot of fun recording it, I have very fond memories," Jared recalls. "The time we spent making the record wasn't all doom and gloom, it was fun. We had access to material in the studio that we hadn't been privy to, we got to work with Matt Bayles which was great... I think we were all at the top of our game musically too. But it's hard for me, as a listener to revisit the record, because the songs are pretty dark. I mean, they're coming from a very dark place in my psyche, and I wasn't necessarily prepared to face the stuff that's in the lyrics. I had to, shortly after the album came out, but now the album makes even more sense to me than it did at the time."

Which of course isn't exclusive to 'Mercy' – both 'Fuck With Fire' and 'Up In Them Guts', or the other smaller releases, aren't exactly easy-listening either. Jared concurs: "Yeah, I agree. It's certainly cathartic, it's very soul-bearing. A lot of that stuff isn't very coded. There's not really any double meanings, it's exactly what it is. At the time I thought I was being clever, writing clever lyrics or something, but it's actually much more like a journal. But 'Mercy' was definitely more on the line, more focused and I think we were actually hungrier. Before, we had been flying around blind, sort of whatever comes out, comes out, kind of thing. With 'Mercy', while it was still both fun and cathartic, we looked at it as a job. We had a job to do, to make good art, and also the job to be a functioning band. We got to a point where we had to start making a living off music, or not do it anymore. There's three children between the four of us, and it gets harder and harder to leave. With responsibility, and also to be responsible to your heart and to your children's hearts, we were definitely feeling that sting. We thought that if we wanted to keep pushing this thing, we could not pay to play anymore. We couldn't lose money, we couldn't drive 500 miles to get paid \$40 for a show. So we decided to take ourselves a bit more seriously. Not sell out, but buy in!"

There is an air of finality to 'Mercy', particularly in the harrowing acoustic closer 'Penitence', so one wonders how much was the band's break-up in their minds already, or if this was just another bout of premonition.

"Maybe a little bit," the vocalist replies after a

"AT THE TIME, I DIDN'T KNOW IT, BUT THE WHOLE THING IS ALL A TRUE STORY. IT WAS KIND OF SELF-PROPHESISING."

little pause to consider it. "I was just burning out emotionally, as a person. I was at the end of a relationship that was twelve years long, everything was kind of crashing... That last song, 'Penitence', it's hard for me to listen to it now. I know what it was, it was a kind of goodbye letter. I wasn't going to jump off a bridge or anything, but I had more or less stopped caring what happened to me, so I was living much more recklessly than what I do now. A lot of the lyrics are actually goodbye lyrics. I didn't know it at the time, but now it's painfully obvious to me."

Gared once mentioned in an interview, when the band was still together, that he often thought of breaking up just to see what would happen. So, when they did, what eventually did happen?

"A lot of good things happened, a lot of dark things too, but a lot of good things mostly," he says. "I went through a pretty gnarly divorce, all of us went through a rather dark period, and it took us a while to learn to live without each other on a daily basis, like we had for so long. But with that space apart, we all grew, and got brave. I did a record by myself which I never thought I'd be able to do, Mikey [Mike Ricketts, drummer] finished a degree in micro-biology, he now teaches college students and travels all over the world collecting core samples. That's pretty fucking brave – 'I used to be a drummer but now I'm going to be a scientist!', you know? I'm so proud of him. Chuck [French, guitarist] and Neil [Keener, bassist] went on to play music with Git Some and toured without me and Mikey and now they're in Wovenhand, which is also very brave. I found the love of my life and I was brave too, to be able to crawl out from all that darkness and allow a bit more light in. All these good things happened, even if it took cracking a few eggs along the way.

Having said that, I make no apology for the album being so dark, because it's a kind of testimony to where our hearts and minds can go. Each song on it has a little glimmer of positivity too, I think. It has a little ethereal quality to it, and it tells a story too, I don't think each song could exist without the next. That's one of the things I'm proudest that we were able to accomplish. That, and the fact that it sounds like nobody else. There'll be little parts similar to other bands, but that's because we all grew up listening to the same old shit and we all like ripping off the same old bands, but overall, still today, I think it doesn't sound like anybody else."

And with the extra clarity given by the truly remarkable remastering of the reissue, they sound even more like themselves than before, if that's possible.

"There's so much I forgot was on it, there's little flourishes of guitar where you can actually hear Chuck's fingers or mine sliding over the strings, that kind of stuff really pops out. It sounds even more personal and intimate than it already did," he says excitedly. Fortunately, that excitement will now, finally, have an outlet. Old fans and newcomers alike, rejoice, for the next few months might hold something we've all been waiting for over the last ten years or so.

"I don't think we'll ever be able to tour as much as we used to, but we've all agreed that we'll keep the band going – in fact, I'm going to the studio next week to do some demos. There's going to be another record," Jared finishes with an obvious hint of pride in his voice. We can't wait, but further spins of 'Mercy' will help bridge the gap. **Q**

'Mercy' is out now on Deathwish

STAGEFRIGHT

EDITED BY KEZ WHELAN

EARTH



TEMPLES FESTIVAL

MOTION, BRISTOL

THURSDAY

Temples starts before it actually starts, as **Bossk** and especially the still vital **...And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead** leave a blazing trail of heaviness and boundless energy during the warm-up show, even without the latter's customary equipment destruction.

FRIDAY

That momentum is enough to carry us through to the first day, as Brighton punks **Teef** open up the main stage in style. It's **Oblivionized** that really get things going on the second stage, however, as frontman Zac Broughton riles up the crowd the only way he knows how – by leaping directly into them and screaming his lungs out.

Falmouth two-piece **Monolithian** are granted the honour of opening up Temples' newly acquired third stage for the first time ever, and to be honest, we couldn't think of a better band for the job, as the pair's bass heavy murk gets heads banging and fists pounding with ease. Back on the second stage, **The Afternoon Gentlemen** prove why

many hail them as one of the UK's finest grind acts, with an ultra-tight blast of madness that gets the crowd acting crazier than anyone has a right to at four in the afternoon. Newly expanded to a five piece, cuts from their new self-titled LP sound crystal clear and heavy as fuck.

Sea Bastard shroud the third stage in their trademark molasses thick doom, played slightly slower than usual due to drummer George Leaver's broken wrist. What a trooper!

Young And In The Way's blistering, confrontational performance overcomes a muffled and frankly volume-lacking sound (a worrying trait throughout the weekend for many bands on this stage in particular), the blackened, abrasive power of their songs and the crazed stare of vocalist Kable Lyall alone enough to make everyone pay some fucking attention. It's almost a ladder of intensity, with each band stepping up on stage and upping the last one's ante – **Trap Them** are a furious whirlwind of anger, vocalist Ryan McKenney not spending a second



PALLBEARER

on stage for the whole show, preferring to scream in people's faces from the photo pit fences for the duration.

Elsewhere, **Meth Drinker** provide the weightiest bass tones of the fest so far. As they unleash a set of unbridled hatred, veins bulging in their foreheads and gigantic, bile soaked riffs rattling out of their amps, the claims of them being spiritual successors to Noothgrush suddenly start to make a lot of sense.

Magrudergrind put in a solid showing over on the third stage, but to be honest, after the Afternoon Gents' blastbeat masterclass, their admittedly stellar grind can't help but feel a little tame in comparison.

The intensity continues back on the main stage, as **Will Haven** throw riff after huge riff at the audience, though Grady Avenell (such a pleasure, still, to see him back with the mic) is still the focal point of the chaos, and **Nails** are just Nails. We half-expect heads to pop halfway through the supremely devastating set where most of their existent material is aired, and they manage to steal the award of band-of-the-day from all the other illustrious veterans.

Back on the third stage, **Slabdragger** put in a reliably chunky performance, with a surprise cover of Frank Zappa's 'Muffin Man' going down a storm at the end. **Weedeater's**



SUNN O)))



TRIPTYKON

rendition of Lynyrd Skynyrd's 'Gimme Back My Bullets' is much more expected but no less awesome, as new drummer Travis Owen's stick twiddling showmanship rivals Dixie Dave's own unhinged stage presence.

The second stage is absolutely rammed for **Pig Destroyer** but, despite the fact that they still bust out all the classics, the additions of bass and electronics have certainly lessened the visceral impact of the band's sound. **Bongzilla** treat to the third stage to a hazy yet suitably raucous jam (complete with an impromptu guest appearance from Dixie Dave), while **Converge** close out proceedings with their customary incendiary set, Jacob Bannon the unbreakable rubber-man bouncing along to Kurt Ballou's inimitable sonic chainsaw of a guitar sound.

SATURDAY

Saturday starts icy cold, as **Caïna** in full band version produce a staggeringly bleak and jarring half-hour. Andrew Curtis-Brignell, free to let loose his guitar wizardry, remains quiet in the corner, but it's from his amazing presence that everything emanates, including the intensity in Lawrence Taylor's vein-popping vocal shriekings. **Celeste**'s visual trickery, the usual darkness+smoke+little red dots would work better on a smaller stage, but musically they're huge enough to fill up the main room and still evoke the sort of atmosphere their songs need to work.

The main magic of Saturday, however, lies on the second stage. It starts with half-naked, loincloth-clad men being bestially primitive, i.e. the incredible **Impetuous Ritual**, proceeds with the stench of incense for the ever-crushing **Grave Miasma** ritual, has two duos as major high points – both **Mantar**'s well oiled black/doom/punk/whatever brand of punishing darkness and **Bölzer**'s unique animalistic attack draw huge crowds – and culminates in the one and only **Portal**. The Australians exceed even the lofty expectations we have for this rare UK appearance and envelop everyone in a surreal whirlwind of ancient horror and savagery. Also, have you tried peering beyond The Curator's face-hiding veil? It's fucking terrifying, almost more so than the all-consuming music we're subjected to. **Portal** would be a perfect closer to the day, or to the festival, or to all life itself, but Tom G. Warrior, the most iconic personality in extreme metal, is above such petty considerations and naturally wipes the floor with the puny audience, reduced to ashes before the might of the **Triptykon**/Celtic Frost/Hellhammer selection of true hymns. Even other musicians, such as Goatwhore's Sammy Duet, are watching from the side of the



CONVERGE

stage with a mix of reverence and excitement.

Of course, there were plenty of other delights on the other stages today too. It was hard not to feel a sense of déjà vu watching **Sonance**'s colossal main stage set after, erm, last year's colossal main stage set – but, hey, if these guys are set to become Temples' house band, that's absolutely fine with us. **Torche** sound pretty monstrous afterwards, songs like 'Charge Of The Brown Recluse' being especially meaty, but are totally out-grooved by the mighty **Goatsnake**. Opening with 'Slippin' The Stealth' and 'Flower Of Disease' has the crowd losing their minds instantly, and Pete Stahl's voice is note perfect and more full of soul than the Motown section of your local record store, even whilst he's bounding about the stage like a man half his age.

Pig Destroyer's second set makes much better use of the newly recruited members, as they play 'Natasha' in its entirety, sounding especially sludgy and malicious during the song's heavier sections. **Skitsystem**'s brash d-beat barrage whips the third stage into a frenzy, although there's a definite rumble in the distance as **Sunn O)))** open with a punishingly slow rendition of Burning Witch's 'Jubilex', and just get heavier from there on in. As Attila Csihar emerges in full-on spiky sci-fi nightmare garb and the final, soul wrenchingly devastating vibrations reach an end, it feels like the whole building has been levelled.

SUNDAY

It seems like we weren't too far off in that estimation either, as Sunday begins an hour later than planned due to worries about the structural integrity of the building – not to mention the host of dead pigeons that fell out of the rafters after Sunn shook 'em loose. **OHHMS** do a respectable job of advancing our tinnitus, but it's **Monarch** who provide the first truly incredible performance of the day, rivalling Sunn for sheer doom power.

The final day reserves a few big names for stage three, so **The King Is Blind** face a bigger responsibility than usual as the first band, which they firmly carry on their broad shoulders with a fine display of old-sounding, doomy death metal. **Tribulation** then slither on stage still looking like they'll play goth versions of Poison songs, but soon the tenebrous magic that drips from their new album 'The Children Of The Night' permeates the cowshed and leaves us entranced until the very last note. Yeah, stage three is in a sort of cowshed, which prompts the best frontman of the weekend, **Vallenfyre**'s Greg Mackintosh (why was this man quiet behind a guitar all those years?), to reflect upon how he's "living the dream!", having played a parking lot in Baltimore the previous weekend (Maryland Deathfest, naturally) and now a cowshed in Bristol. And then he almost brings down said cowshed with the crusty, raw potency of Vallenfyre's unstoppable performance.

Watching **Year Of No Light** on the main stage feels like watching a star slowly shrivel up and die, such is the

hypnotic yet bleak power they emanate. **Krokodil** sound wafer thin in comparison, although **Ghould** beat everyone with one of the heftiest performances the main stage sees all weekend. Tracks from their latest 'Of Ruin' are an absolute joy to behold on a stage (and sound system) this size, and the pair's magnetic presence manages to fill every inch of it. **KEN mode** sound severely pissed off on the second stage, as the dual bass guitar assault of new song 'Blessed' threatens to do to this room what Sunn did to the main stage last night.

Goatwhore achieve similar heights on the third stage, 'FBS' being a particular highlight, but the whole thing inspires a constant throwing of horns. The very best of the best, however, is appropriately left for last – not only do **Voivod** put on one of their best gigs we've ever witnessed (which is saying something), but the connection to the audience, on a smaller stage than their usual, is almost symbiotic. There's smiles, chanting, funny faces being pulled, Rob 'The Baron' Miller cheering on his new Tau Cross bandmate from the side of the stage... it's a feel-good, celebratory experience like few others we've ever been at, worth the admission to the whole shebang.

Temples is the fest that keeps on giving, though, as **Pallbearer** hold an absolutely rapt main stage audience in the palms of their hands, clearly as elated as we all are to be here. As an incredibly moving rendition of 'Foreigner' closes their set, there's no doubt that all the hype surrounding this band is justified – they really are just *that good*. **Between The Buried And Me** can't follow that at all, and by the time **Earth** take to the stage most of us can barely even stand, but that doesn't stop them from ruling. Hypnotising all and sundry with a set drawn heavily from new album 'Primitive And Deadly' (but also including an utterly beautiful 'Ouroboros Is Broken'), the steady, meditative power of Dylan Carlson's slow motion riffery is the perfect way to draw the weekend to a close.

Words: **José Carlos Santos, Kez Whelan**
Pics: **Christian Ravel, Antony Roberts**



BONGZILLA

GOD SEED

INCINERATION FESTIVAL 2015

VARIOUS VENUES, LONDON

After 2014's first Incineration occupying two stages at The Garage, this year's event is a much more ambitious affair as the festival takes over three venues in London; The Electric Ballroom, The Underworld and The Black Heart, the smallest of the three (ignoring the aftershow party at The Devonshire Arms). On arrival there were immediate problems with ticketing arrangements, with wristbands being available from The Black Heart, and a black-clad queue of extreme metal fans extended around the block of Greenland Place as late as 2pm, a good hour after **Codex Alimentarius** fulfilled the task of being the first of the day's ten bands to play The Black Heart, and did so to a sparsely-populated room.

The admissions botch-up costs **Woland** a sizeable chunk of their prospective audience over in the Electric Ballroom too. But despite an inevitably meagre turnout, the charismatic Finns instantly work their blackened magic on the crowd as lean, Satyricon-flavoured grooves writhe beneath an electrifying expanse of frostbitten tremolo.

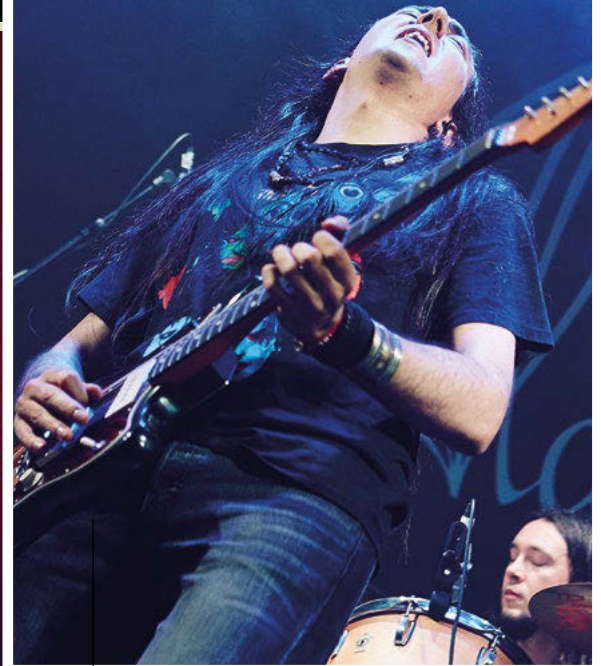
In the Underworld meanwhile, **Premature Birth's** savage black metal is a rude awakening. Certainly their output sounds a bit dated but their eerie keyboards and

nasty vocals hark back to the early nineties in a gloriously unrefined fashion. London trio **Bast** build on that momentum, painting a murky collage of tar-soaked riffs and gritty vocals. Material from their magnificent 'Spectres' opus wins over several new friends today.

A larger crowd greet **Jotnarr** at the Black Heart and the three-piece deliver an intelligent and intricate set. Having no bass guitar, the band's heartbeat is set with energetic drumming that really holds their sound together. The three musicians work together with great chemistry and perform complex yet punky black metal very well. Up next, **Foetal Juice** are a brick in the face. Somewhat overwhelmed by the crowd's reception, the band perform a set of competent if not adept pugilistic grind/death metal with wit, entertaining with songs like 'Service Station Masturbation'. Humour aside, the band certainly know how to write a song and are sharp and well-rehearsed.

Back in the Ballroom, there's barely a breath of reprieve to be salvaged from **Aura Noir's** ceaselessly battering assault on the senses. As such, the relentlessly barrelling pace and repetitious phrasing that dictates their staunchly traditional fare may fail to sustain more forward-thinking

ALCEST



appetites, but as evidenced by the audience's frenzied reaction, there's no denying its aggressive appeal. Submerging ritualistic beats in a mind-altering cocktail of snaking distortion and alien atmospherics, it's with elegant pacing and strategic placement that **Oranssi Pazuzu** set about weaving their otherworldly craft. Through dense, neon-lit plumes of fog, restless wisps of psychedelia worm their way into the brain through spiralling channels of hypnotic darkness.

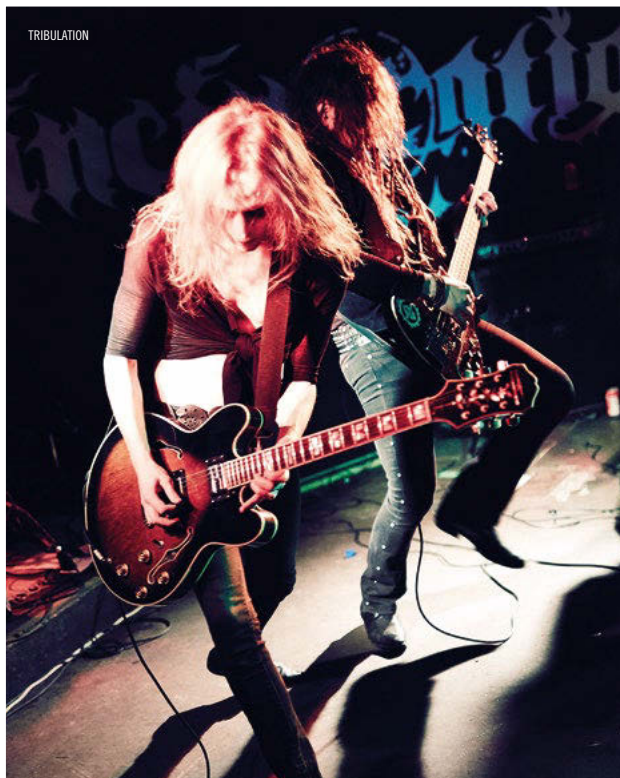
Technical perfection in death metal is an often sought after attribute but there's something not quite right about **Otagos'** performance back at the Underworld. The precision they demonstrate on the likes of 'Apex Terror' is a thing of beauty and the Frenchmen are blessed with an abundance of stage presence, yet their opulent solos are unfortunately subdued in the mix. As you'd expect there's nothing remotely subdued about **Prostitute Disfigurement** who usher in a host of body surfing and slam dancing with their visceral necrotic attack.

Having seen **From The Bogs Of Aughiska** soar over many people's heads supporting Wardruna last year, it was pleasing to see the room completely full to greet this conceptual noise duo. Making a sound so utterly sinister, visually accompanied by a shifting backdrop of stark, desolate images, it is difficult to pull off a set of such complexity but they do so extremely well, carefully structuring and building atmosphere and shaking the building to its core. Towards the end, the ghostly figures who had been standing on stage take to bass and drums and the now four-piece produce a five-minute motoring crescendo of noise, disparate and rooted in barren drone. As the band take leave to the sound of rainwater and feedback, this outstanding set is totally appreciated by the audience.

Gathering velocity across acrobatic tremolo, **Keep Of Kalessin** leave punters reeling in their wake before a breakneck repertoire of rallying cries and stratospheric solos add irresistibly hooky momentum to the mix. Unfurling in varying shades of blackened shredding and epic atmospherics, the Norwegians combine these respective dynamics to tremendously entertaining effect.

Channelling the spirit of Dissection and early Mayhem in the Black Heart, **Verdelet** are probably the tallest band of the weekend. Bassist Hareth is like some improbable praying mantis, taking control of his low slung bass and wielding it like a vicious, threatening appendage. All corpse-painted up, they

Words: **Ross Baker, Faye Coulman, Miranda Yardley** Pics: **Leigh van der Byl**



sure look the part and play loud and fast black metal with bags of attitude, theatre and impassioned performance.

German's **Endstille** remain myopically focussed on their thrashing black metal but there's little to get excited about with many punters choosing so get a better spot for Melechesh at the Electric Ballroom. **Centurian** fare better with their blasphemous offerings. The Dutch quartet pack plenty of groove along with their technical blast orientated workouts but their heads-down, hard-at-it approach offers little in the way of visual entertainment.

Speaking of **Melechesh**, with their lithe, Middle Eastern flourishes intertwining seamlessly with a well-muscled backbone of lacerating fretwork, it's not long

before these insanely paced strains of ancient evil leave listeners dizzy with aggression. Adorning their abrasive blasts with layer upon layer of gilded strings, the sheer enormity of their presence looms exceptionally large throughout 'Multiple Truths' majestic orchestrations.

Back in the Black Heart, a smaller crowd greet the deathly thrash of Canterbury's **Wretched Soul**. They thrash through their set at breakneck speed and are rewarded with a respectably energetic circle pit. A great performance with great showmanship.

Clinging to the mic stand with an air of manic agitation, frontman Niklas Kvarforth's fidgeting stage antics in the Electric Ballroom barely scratch the surface of the crushing desperation and beauty that abounds in **Shining's** intensely disquieting arrangements. With his crooning whispers drowning in a turbulent tide of acoustics, churning bass and agile Pink Floyd-isms breathe insidious darkness into this emotionally jarring standout of a set.

By far the best act the Underworld sees all day, **Tribulation** are simply magnificent. Cuts from fantastic new opus 'The Children Of The Night' and their 'The Formulas Of Death' platter see energy levels reach fever pitch. Bassist/vocalist Johannes Andersson's feral growl ties the old and new together with both the progressive and more recent occult rock flavoured material receiving an emphatic response. Oozing charisma, it won't be long before they command venues larger than this one.

Over at the Black Heart, **Funeral Throne** play like a band with three frontmen, which of course is pretty much what they are. Their upbeat performance goes down extremely well, the band making a powerful, dirty and noisy sound, mixing black metal, proper hardcore and good, old-fashioned heavy metal delivered with spirit, yet never taking themselves too seriously. Not having made a record since 2012, this is **Essenz's** first ever show on British soil and despite clashing with both God Seed and Impaled Nazarene, their enigmatic set is well-received by a respectable crowd.

On the subject of **Impaled Nazarene**, the grisly veterans give a typically muscular performance in the Underworld, inspiring stage invaders to hurl

themselves forward. 'The Horny And The Horned' and 'Total War – Winter War' ignite a rabid response as the audience take up the choruses of their vehemently anti-Christian hymns. Tonight's set is delivered with such passion and intensity that all are swept away in their wake. Elsewhere, **God Seed's** tautly synchronised range of chugging contortions and scalpel-edged riffs coalesce into a singularly epic feat of extremity. Half-submerged in blastbeating implosions, the lurching throes of 'Sign Of An Open Eye' accelerate wildly atop a thorny mass of riffage that ensnares the ears with coldly calculated wickedness.

Back in the Underworld, **Necrophobic** amp things up even further with their unmitigated evil bombast. Their extrovert stage posturing borders on parody, but the barbed shredding and anthemic fretwork is irresistible to the assembled hordes who lap up every minute of it.

Alfahanne appear to be The Black Heart's most anticipated band of the weekend. They take to the stage with rock 'n' roll swagger and tear through a set of black metal mixed with classic rock. Ten minutes in, they're joined by Shining's Niklas Kvarforth who whips the audience up even more, and Alfahanne finish with a roar and a bang.

With drink-sodden synapses still crackling with adrenaline, **Alcest's** luscious riffs and gossamer-fine fretwork effortlessly eases the quietly awed crowd into this irregular yet utterly entrancing change of pace. From a primordial rumble of snares that punctuates celestial choirs to exquisitely feathery chord progressions, theirs is a set rich in otherworldly echoes and shadows. While a few early offerings from the Frenchmen's back catalogue are muddled by occasional bouts of too-intense aggression, the cascading leads and crystalline flurries of 'Les Voyages de L'Âme' find this transporting formula on moving form.

After all that, **Unleashed** are up against it from the off but their bludgeoning death metal manages to rally the audience who readily surrender themselves to their savage Viking battle cry. Choosing to focus on their more recent material, Johnny Hedlund and company fall just short of the unmitigated aggression that preceded them on the Underworld's stage today, but still receive a respectable response. Recent cuts like the anthemic 'Triumph Of Genocide' stand shoulder to shoulder with classics such as 'If They Had Eyes', even surpassing them in terms of crowd reaction.

It's down to **Ingested** to finish the evening, and to their credit they again pack out the room in spite of a clashes elsewhere. Having matured somewhat with this year's 'The Architect Of Extinction', the band seem invigorated, having found their own sonic identity, and entertain with their savage slam making heads bang.



ELECTRIC WIZARD

ELECTRIC WIZARD

+ THE COSMIC DEAD + PURSON + MOSS

ROUNDHOUSE, LONDON

There's something more than a little jarring about watching **Moss's** smoked-out, soul-crushingly desolate doom in a half-empty Roundhouse, as sunlight streams down outside. Still, they take a good shot at levelling the building, Olly Pearson's shrieks separating the lifers from the simply curious. The room's filled up a little by the time that **Purson** take the stage, ushering in an parallel reality where nothing of note has changed since the '70s. That's no criticism: their mesmeric and soulful fare going down a treat tonight. Rosalie Cunningham is one of the most charismatic vocalists anywhere at the minute, and they should have one hell of a bright future.

Next up, it's "Scotland's foremost Hawkwind tribute band", **The Cosmic Dead**. They're hard to match for intensity; conjuring up a whirlwind of psychotropic mayhem, song-structures dissolving at the wayside as they build towards a titanic climax. It's the kind of set that upstagings are made of. But then, we're talking about an **Electric fuckin' Wizard** show here. Launching into the bowel-rattling riffs of 'Witchcult Today' and 'Black Mass', they're clearly on a roll; backed

by video projections of Satanic rituals and vintage horror kink (sorry, parents of kid in the back row). The four-piece strike a balance between crushing, feedback-drenched heft and lurching groove, reaching a peak with 'Dopethrone'. Jus Oborn and Liz Buckingham seem eerily in sync, a late double-header of 'Incense For The Damned' and 'Time To Die' underlining the fact that, so many years down the line, they remain almost without peer. It's one of their strongest performances in some time and, fingers crossed, we won't have to wait quite so long for a follow-up.



Words: **Rob Sayce** Pics: **Marie Korner**

VOIVOD



VOIVOD

THE UNDERWORLD, LONDON

It takes some kind of cocksure attitude to casually toss away one of the greatest tunes of the '80s (which by extension remains – whisper it – probably the greatest decade in metal history) as the second song of your set, but that's exactly what Voivod do tonight, as the rumbling drum tattoo of 'Tribal Convictions' inspires awe and gurning amongst the throng of musos and diehards. Geographical isolation was arguably one of the factors that led to this band's resolutely undated brew of fiery punk, knotty prog and incendiary metal being formed, and it could also thus be claimed that the conditions simply will never exist again, given the internet has made the world a smaller place, to create another band remotely like the extraterrestrial mania of Voivod, which makes us all the more grateful for Snake's strangely charismatic presence on the mic, Away's watertight battery and the note-perfect intensity of new(er) recruits Chewy and Rocky. Voivod may be saddled with the poison chalice of cult status for the rest of their days, yet when they're dishing out shows as rabid as this one – a veritable embarrassment of setlist riches deployed with gung-ho spirit, savage fortitude and dizzying power – the joke's on everyone not in this room tonight.

Words: **Jimmy Martin** Pic: **Leigh van der Byl**

FLOTSAM & JETSAM

+ BEHOLDER

QUEENS HALL, NUNEATON

Unfortunately arriving too late to catch Bliksem from Antwerp, **Beholder** are onstage as we roll into the grandly-named Queens Hall. The Coventry band are obviously local favourites, and their indomitable enthusiasm, playing as though they're headlining Monsters Of Rock, not to mention a nice line in heavy yet melodic riffing, quickly wins over the modest crowd.

But if you're talking 'heavy' and 'melodic' in the same sentence, is there anyone that fits the bill better than Arizonan veterans, **Flotsam And Jetsam**? A few technical glitches aside, they sound amazing, and their 90 minute set is a genuine master class in thrash riffing, the incredibly fluent fretwork of Michael Gilbert and Steve Conley literally staggering to behold. New drummer Jason Bittner (yes, he of Shadows Fall and Toxik fame) owns the set like he wrote it himself... and what a set! Drawing heavily on the first two albums, it's a veritable greatest hits selection, and once vocalist Eric K. has warmed to the occasion, he pretty much hits every single note like it was 1986. And for 90 magical minutes tonight, we forgot that it wasn't.

Words: **Ian Glasper**

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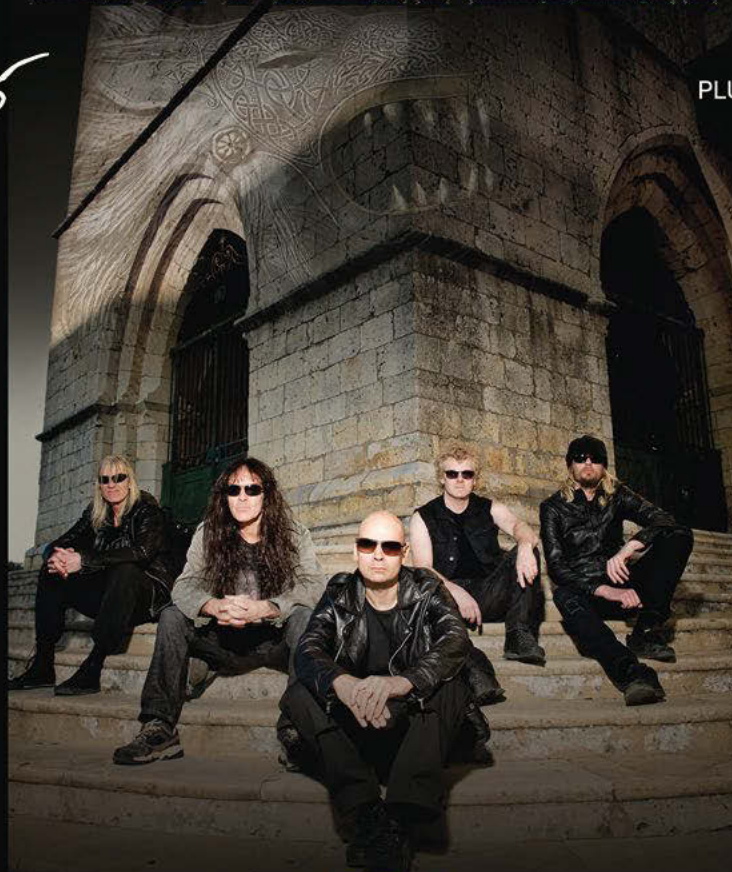
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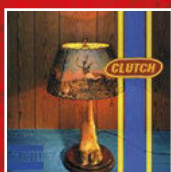
“THEIR CAUSTIC HARDCORE PROVED IT DIDN'T HAVE TO BE ALL BASKETBALL TOPS AND QUESTIONABLE LYRICS”



METALLICA

'Metal Militia' FROM 'Kill 'Em All' (MEGAFORCE, 1983)

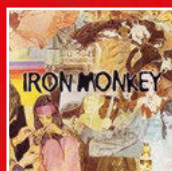
"School summer sports days were never quite so inclusive for me, and listening to 'Kill 'Em All' on my brick-sized cassette Walkman, laying on the grass, with sick note firmly deposited with the gym teacher made for a very formative time. It was the first Metallica album I bought, and remains the most vital in their catalogue for me. Dropping out never felt so righteous."



CLUTCH

'A Shotgun Named Marcus' FROM 'Transnational Speedway League' (EASTWEST, 1993)

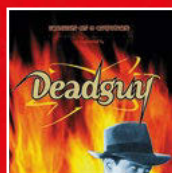
"Seeing 'A Shotgun Named Marcus' on Raw Power/Noisy Mothers made me think Clutch were genuine rednecks, and a freshly bizarre taste of heavy music without the overt metal stylings. I saw them open for Biohazard in Cardiff Bogiez in the summer of '93, and my life was changed. My first band [Taint] was to form a year later, as a direct response to said Clutch gig giving me the impetus (sic) to do so."



IRON MONKEY

'666 Pack' FROM 'Iron Monkey' (EARACHE, 1997)

"Taint were well into playing our first local shows in the infamous Swansea Coach House pub. The Acrimony guys brought visiting bands of varying genres, until one really stuck out from the crowd. Their singer bald and tortured, their riffs like a skanky dole-queue version of Eyehategod and their overall presence part slacker, part debt-collector. Iron Monkey were in town and played their third ever gig with us [Taint] and Acrimony. I took a few listens to warm to them, having already become an EHG devotee, but it wasn't long before I saw the 'Monkey again, and again, and fell further into their web of piss."



DEADGUY

'Doom Patrol' FROM 'Fixation On A Coworker' (VICTORY, 1995)

"That Biohazard gig in '93 was a gateway into hardcore for me, while further avenues were the homegrown Armed With Anger and Land Of Treason distro lists. Along came the Victory Style samplers with the mighty Deadguy as the pearl amongst the swine. Their caustic take on hardcore opened my eyes, proving it didn't have to be all basketball tops and questionable lyrics."



BOTCH

'Man The Ramparts' FROM 'We Are The Romans' (HYDRA HEAD, 1999)

"We Are The Romans' sounded like nothing else, while peers such as Dillinger, Converge and Isis were all forging their own, unique paths. Adding noisy complexity to classic rock/metal and sludgier influences was a welcome angle to how I ingested heavy music. This was all pre-Mastodon too, remember kids."



SCORN

'Take Someone's Eye Out' FROM 'Refuse; Start Fires' (OHM RESISTANCE, 2010)

"With Earache records"

diversification in the '90s, came Mick Harris' Scorn. Always dark and foreboding, this heavy dub core started to somehow synchronize with my social life in the cultural backwater of Swansea. At eighteen years old, some friends and I realised that the free party/rave scene here gave us another outlet, alongside the rock and indie clubs. We used to go raving all night long, and took the necessary stimulants to make it through."



TECHNO ANIMAL

'Freefall' FROM 'The Brotherhood Of The Bomb' (MATADOR, 2001)

"This classic Techno Animal album also slots nicely in with my expansion into darker, digital realms. Whereas some metallers from my school days went irrevocably into the dark/dance side of music, with gabber hardcore replacing their thrash metal allegiance entirely, I always felt like there was room for both."



DIE ANTWOORD

'Rat Trap 666' FROM 'Donker Mag' (ZEF, 2014)

"No band has initially repelled me, and then begun to entice, hypnotise and conquer me quite like Die Antwoord has over the past year. DJ Muggs [Cyprus Hill] produced the brooding 'Rat Trap' and the sparse, dark production alongside the skewed, South African flow of the vocal protagonists. Having experienced a few unsavoury characters over the past few years, it's not hard to relate to the 'Caught up in a fucking rat trap, first the front then the back stab', mantra." 🐀

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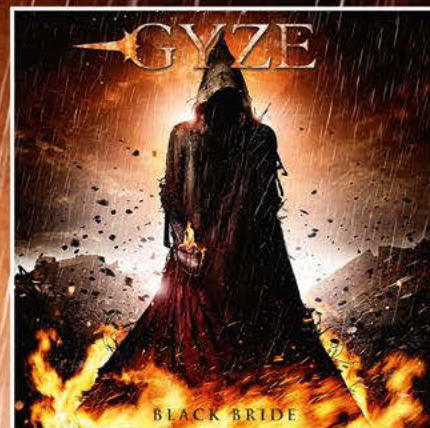
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